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THE

MISCELLANEOUS PROSE WORKS

OF

SIR WALTER SCOTT, BART.

VOL. XXVII.

TALES OF A GRANDFATHER.

VOL VI.

FRANCE.

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TALES OF A GRANDFATHER.

BY

SIR WALTER SCOTT, Bart.

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TO

MASTER JOHN HUGH LOCKHART.

My Dear Boy,

I must no longer treat you as a child; so I now lay aside the pet appellation of Hugh Littlejohn, Esq., and address you by your name. Heaven, at whose pleasure we receive good and evil—and we are bound to receive both with thanks and gratitude—has afflicted you from infancy with a delicacy of constitution. With this misfortune there are often connected tastes and habits the most valuable any man can acquire, but which are indispensable to those who are liable, from indifferent health, to be occasionally confined to the solitude of their own apartment. The hours you now employ in reading are passed happily, and render you independent of the society of others, but will yet prove far more valuable to you in future life, since, if your studies are well directed, and

earnestly pursued, there is nothing to prevent your rising to be at once an ornament and a benefit to society. It is with great pleasure, my dearest boy, that your parents remark in you early attention to your book, and a marked desire to profit by what you read; nor can I, as one of the number, make a better use of a part of my leisure time than to dedicate it to your advantage and that of your contemporaries, who, I trust, will play their parts honourably in the world, long after the generation to which your grandfather belongs has mouldered into earth.

The volumes which I formerly inscribed related to a part of Great Britain only: but it was to that portion which should be dear to us both, as the land of our fathers; and I was therefore induced to descend more into particulars than I should have ventured upon in any other narrative. I have been assured from many quarters that the Tales from Scottish History have been found useful and interesting to the young persons to whom they were addressed, and that some even of those whose wild spirits and youthful years had hitherto left them little time or inclination to study, have been nevertheless captivated by stories, which, while they are

addressed to the imagination, are, at the same time, instructive to the understanding.

It would have been natural that I should next have adopted English history as my theme; but there are so many excellent abridgements, that I willingly leave you to acquire a knowledge of that important subject from other sources. The History of England, in Letters, said to be from a nobleman to his son, and sometimes called Lord Lyttelton's Letters, but in reality written or compiled by Dr Oliver Goldsmith, gives the liveliest and best views of it; to this you must, in due time, add the perusal of the many and interesting volumes which give a fuller account of the history of the more important part of our island of Britain.

In the mean time, it is highly proper you should know something of the history of France, whose influence upon the Continent of Europe has almost always been struggling and contending with that of England herself, and with such obstinacy as to give rise to wars the most bloody by which the peace of the world has been at any period disturbed.

I have, as you will observe, been occasionally called to interrupt the current of the work by remarks which the incidents demanded. Still,

however, I have endeavoured to make amusement the mode of introducing instruction; remembering always that I am no longer writing for the amusement of a child of five years, but composing a work to be submitted to the criticism of a young person who wears masculine garments, and will soon be nine years old. Under these increasing difficulties, it will give me pleasure to find that I still possess the power to interest and instruct you; being with warm regard,

My dear John Hugh,
Your very affectionate Grandfather,
WALTER SCOTT.

ABBOTSFORD,
29*th July*, 1830.

TALES OF A GRANDFATHER.

CHAPTER I.

The most Patriotic States have been generally the most Ambitious—Aggressions of Rome upon the Independence of Foreign Nations—Gaul—its Description and Inhabitants—Their Religion—The Order of Druids—The Military Character of the Gauls—They invade Italy—and Greece—Their vicinity dangerous to Rome—Cæsar appointed General in Gaul—Resolution of the Helvetians to emigrate—The difficulties of their Route—Cæsar blocks up the Passage between Geneva and Mount Jura—Pursues the Helvetians as far as the Arar, and destroys their Rearguard—At last, totally defeats them—The Germans cross the Rhine to invade Gaul—Their Character, Genius, and Manners—The Roman Soldiers mutiny, but are pacified by Cæsar's Address—Cæsar defeats Ariovistus and the Germans—Conquest of Gaul by Cæsar.

The love of power is deeply impressed on mankind, whether they have a political existence in the relation of states and empires, or remain in their individual capacity. Even in those strict republics, where individuals find it most difficult to

raise themselves to superior stations, whether by address, eloquence, or any other influential superiority, the desire to add to the power which may be enjoyed and wielded by the public at large is more strongly felt by each person, exactly in proportion to his own exclusion from individual authority; and the reason is plain, because the poorest and most humble citizen beholds himself, in idea, enriched with a portion of the fame and power acquired by the state, and considers himself as a gainer in the good fortune of the commonwealth of which he is a member. It thus follows, that, for a time at least, the love of the republic supersedes the plans which men entertain under other forms of government for their private advantage.

It cannot be denied, that a state which can thus engross, for the public service, all the estimable and useful qualities of its citizens, presents an imposing spectacle, grand and unconquerable in the talents and capacities which it unites, and commanding at pleasure all that can be sacrificed in its cause, from the knowledge of the most profound philosopher, to the courage and life of its hardiest peasant. Yet, pushed to excess, this disinterested patriotism must, far from being considered a virtue, be numbered in the rolls of vice. To pillage and oppress, to conquer and subdue the freedom and independence of other states, is not laudable, any more than to rob and slay for the maintenance of our own household; though, to provide for our family by lawful means is an imperious duty.

Rome, the mistress, or rather the tyrant, of the world, as it was then known to exist, grew to her excess of power by the injustice of her children, who held it as the principle of their being, that the empire should be extended as far as the habitable world permitted.

That extensive yet compact country, now called France, and at an earlier period known by the name of Gallia, or Gaul, was one of the most important which was exposed to the general encroachments made by Rome on her neighbours. But the inhabitants being a very numerous, courageous people, and much disposed to martial achievements, were addicted, like most other nations, to leave their own country when they found their population increase, and hive off in military colonies, to establish new settlements elsewhere. They were, in this respect, neighbours who struck terror even into the Romans themselves, and who, although often at war with that great republic, were not finally or effectually subdued until the last days of Roman freedom.

Gaul was understood to contain the whole country bounded by the Pyrenees, the Alps, the Rhine, the Mediterranean Sea, and the Ocean, but considerable portions have been since detached from modern France. Such were the Cantons of Switzerland, with the German territories on the Rhine.

This portion of Europe, considerable not only from its extent, but from its climate and fertility, was chiefly, but not entirely, inhabited by the descendants of the Celtic race. These Celts, by whom

Gaul was first peopled, appear to have been the great family by which the habitable parts of Europe were first settled, though their descendants were afterwards conquered and overcome by the Gothic tribes—the second great colonists of the most civilized quarter of the globe.

But two great portions of the Gallic Celts had admitted such modifications of language and manners, the one from the neighbouring Germans, the other from its connexion with the Spaniards, that the first people were called Belgians, the second Celtiberians, to distinguish them from the more genuine and unmixed Celts. That they were originally all descended from the same race, is proved by the remains of their language, names, and customs.

The manners of the Celts, and especially their religious institutions, were peculiar. They acknowledged one supreme Deity, whom they called Esus, and performed their rites of adoration in the depths of forests, or surrounded by huge circles of stones, rough, unhewn, and placed upright. Their chief priests were called Druids, a race set apart among them for conducting the public worship, as well as for preserving the knowledge of their laws and histories. These were usually couched in poetry, which the Druids committed to memory, and recited at their periodical meetings and festivals.

These Druids seem to have erected one of the most artful and complete systems of priestcraft which the world ever saw. The authority per-

mitted to magistrates, kings, or princes, according to the constitution of the community, was supposed to be sanctioned and delegated by the priests, and the government was always directed by their opinion. They had absolute influence over the gentry of the tribe, to whom they gave the epithet of riders, or horsemen, the value of a warrior being always raised by the possession of a horse. Human sacrifices were frequently offered up, under a mistaken impression, that we ought to present to the Deity what our race holds most dear, which undoubtedly is the principle of human life.

The Bards formed another class, only inferior to the Druids in importance. Music and poetry were eagerly cultivated by the Gauls. These national poets sung hymns to their deity, and the praises of deceased warriors; and such was the fondness of the people for these arts, that when, on their conversion to Christianity, it was the object to fix their attention upon the Scriptures, it was found the best method to translate the Sacred Writings into poetry, and set them to music.

The government in Gaul was various among the different independent states, which, according as custom prevailed among them, were governed by kings, or by elective magistrates. They were prompt and ready in battle; a bold, fiery, warlike race, whose very women used to sustain the fight when the men were defeated, and who often slew themselves rather than surrender to an enemy.

In appearance they were a handsome people; rough in their manners, yet not untinctured with

civility. They combed their hair forward, so as to give a wildness and ferocity to their aspect, wore tight trowsers and a loose mantle. Their chiefs wore a chain of gold, twisted out of flexible rods of that medal, such as children make out of bulrushes. Manlius, an ancient Roman, who killed a champion thus decorated, assumed from thence the additional name of Torquatus, or him with the Chain. Besides this *Torques*, or Twist, as it was called, the Gauls wore bracelets, and ornaments round the ankle, and the wealthy had them made of the same precious metal.

The Gauls carried hospitality to strangers to the utmost extent. They were profuse in eating, and still more in the use of strong liquors. The Romans accused them of being fickle, uncertain, and treacherous to their engagements. But they were probably not more so than the Romans themselves.

We have mentioned that the nations of Gaul, or rather the infinity of small states into which it was divided, were so very populous, that, when their numbers seemed about to exceed the means of subsistence produced by their imperfect agriculture, great colonies of them departed from their native country, with a view to provide themselves with new settlements at the expense of some richer or more thinly peopled region.

In this manner the Gauls, in olden times, were frequently troublesome neighbours to the Romans, surmounting the Alps, and extending themselves to Lombardy, where they established strong colonies. They frequently invaded the southern parts

of Italy, acquired lands there, and under their general, Brennus, burnt and pillaged the city of Rome itself, three hundred and eighty-five years before the Christian era; they were, however, obliged to retreat from the citadel, or Capitol, and were finally defeated by the Dictator Camillus. The Gauls also rendered themselves formidable at a later period, by an invasion of Greece under a second general of the name of Brennus, who seized upon the treasures which had been stored up by the devotion of ages, in the celebrated Temple of Apollo at Delphos. In these excursions, you must not conceive that the Gallic invaders acted as the forces of one united kingdom, but rather as an assemblage of independent bands belonging to the various states, cities, and communities, into which the country was subdivided, united for a time under a single chief, to whom the rest yielded the supreme authority, as to the most powerful or the most skilful in war.

The rapine of these desultory hosts was the more dreaded and execrated, that from their religious principles turning on the worship of one only Deity, whom they adored in the depths of forests, and not in houses made with human hands, they were in the habit of dishonouring and destroying the temples and altars of other nations.

Nor was their conduct in battle less formidable than their principles were obnoxious. The Gauls were famous for their bravery and love of war, which they carried so far, that they accounted it

cowardice to make use of defensive armour, and rushed upon the spears of their enemies with undefended bosoms. This contempt of precaution was joined with other faults, which exposed them to great loss in regular actions with the experienced Romans; yet, so dangerous were they, from their great numbers, and the fury of their assault, undisciplined as it was, that Cicero declares, that had not the passage of the Alps, by which alone they could reach Italy, been too difficult, and had not the mountains possessed too scanty means of sustenance for the passage of a Gallic army in its full numbers, that nation must have destroyed the city of Rome itself, even before its greatness was established. On this account, according to the opinion of Cicero, the Gauls, until the conquests of Julius Cæsar, continued to be the most obstinate and formidable enemies of the Romans. So generally were they considered as such, that, in the celebrated conspiracy of Catiline, it was partly the intention of the plotters to have drawn from Gaul a considerable force for the execution of their purpose, which comprehended nothing less than the total destruction of the Roman form of government. The Gauls, indeed, did not snatch at this bait; certain ambassadors of the Allobroges, a people of Savoy in alliance with Rome, having informed the Consul Sanga of the proposals which had been made to them, materially assisted the discovery of the plot. Nevertheless, the dread of their future interference with

other internal feuds of the same nature, was a secret reason for urging the subjugation of this powerful people.

The Romans also possessed one small province in Gaul, in which they claimed a special and peculiar interest. It was more than a century before Christ's birth, that the Consul Marcius Rex took one step towards the subjection of Gaul, by establishing a Roman colony between the Pyrenean chain of mountains and the city of Toulouse, where he founded the state called Narbonne. This colony was connected with Italy by a military road between the Alps and Pyrenees, and afforded, as you will presently see, most of the pretexts which the Republic brought forward for interfering with the affairs of Gaul. The protection of the Allobroges, and other states in the neighbourhood of the province who had embraced the friendship of Rome, formed a perpetual apology for such intermeddling.

Thus the conquest of Gaul, though undoubtedly Cæsar was encouraged in the attempt by the hope of adding to the power and renown of the Republic, and raising himself in the opinion of his fellow-citizens, was, in a certain degree, founded on state necessity. But, besides the ordinary reasons for which Rome took up arms, grounds of serious political envy and hatred impelled the conquerors of the world to make a war of subjection on a people who were always restless neighbours, and occasionally dangerous enemies.

In Cæsar, the Romans enjoyed the advantage of a general equally wise and skilful, and who, considering his own ambitious views as inseparably connected with the conquest and final subjection of Gaul, neglected no means of accomplishing an object so much desired by his countrymen, and so essential to his own fortunes.

The principal circumstance which afforded exercise for Julius Cæsar's political sagacity, and a pretext at the same time for his military exploits, was the subdivision of this great country into a numberless variety of cities, governments, and states, trespassing almost always on each other, and engaged in endless and complicated feuds, which perpetually called for, or at least served to excuse, the interference of the Roman General, who, while he pretended to advocate the rights, and protect the cause, of the Gallic allies of Rome, failed not to seize the opportunity of destroying one state by the arms of another, of which transactions his Commentaries, as you are already aware, afford a most curious, as well as elegant narrative.

A singular resolution on the part of the Helvetians, a Gallic tribe of great numbers and bravery, afforded Cæsar the first opportunity and apology for armed interference in the affairs of Gaul. They had already been at war with the Romans, and had, at no distant period, defeated a considerable army of the Republic, forcing them to lay down their arms, and only sparing their lives on condition of their passing under the yoke, account-

ed at the time an acknowledgment of the most abject surrender. One of Cæsar's own relatives had shared in this degradation.

The habit of emigration was then so general, that the spirit of local attachment, which is at this day one of the strongest principles of the modern Swiss, had no weight with the ancient Helvetians. With the same impatience which had formerly induced their Celtic forefathers to change their position from one place to another, the Helvetians determined to quit the barren mountains where they were born, and march forth in a body to establish, by fair means or by force, new settlements in other regions. After some feuds among themselves, which terminated in the death of a great chief, named Orgetorix, with whom the design of emigration originated, the Helvetians finally proceeded to carry it into execution. Turning their backs, as they designed, for ever, on their native valleys and mountains, and burning their towns, twelve in number, with forty villages, they, with their wives and children, cattle and slaves, set forth upon their perilous adventure. In our day, hardly any thing could be accounted so strange as the resolution of a nation to leave its own familiar abode, and set forth on a vague expedition to settle in foreign parts. But, at the period I mention, fifty-eight years before the birth of our Saviour, this wandering people had little of what we now call love of their native land, and willingly undertook the labour and risk of such a journey, in the hardy confidence that they would easily find a

country more pleasant and fertile than their own barren regions, and that they could scarcely be obliged to encounter, in defence of it, a nation of more bravery and warlike temper than they were conscious of bringing along with them.

An incursion so bold as that which the Helvetians proposed, the Romans had a fair pretence for resisting; the more, as the Helvetians proposed to march into Gaul itself through the territory of the Allobroges, whom we have already mentioned as allies of the Romans, and near neighbours to the Roman province, and of course under the protection of the republic.

At this extraordinary intelligence, Cæsar, who had been lately appointed Prætor, set off with the utmost speed from Rome, to look after the pressing affairs of the Gallic province which had been committed to his charge. Here he defended the frontiers of the Allobroges by raising a long wall, flanked with towers, hastily erected indeed, but with such judgment that the Helvetians did not venture to attack it.

The expatriated nation being obliged to change its line of march, had only one road remaining, which led into Gaul through the territory of the Sequani, now called Burgundy. This road, running among cliffs and torrents, was judged totally inaccessible without the consent of the Sequani themselves; but by the intercession of Dumnorix, a chief of the Æduans, a people whose territory lay near Autun, the Helvetians obtained permission to pass through the defiles of the Burgundians

unopposed, so that they might afterwards march in a direction which should enable them to approach the ancient Tolosatium, now Toulouse. By this movement the Roman province was highly endangered. The Æduans, friends, if not allies of the Romans, were mortal enemies of the Sequani, and besought assistance from Cæsar against the stream of Helvetians who were thus poured into their territory. Cæsar hastened the motions of his army, for the purpose of intercepting the proposed march of the Helvetians, and preventing the threatened devastation of Gaul. So rapid were his movements, that he overtook the rear of their army, consisting of one-fourth of the whole, while it lay encamped on the eastern banks of the Arar, or Saone (the other three-fourths having already passed the river), and falling upon them, while thus separated from the main body, surprised and cut them to pieces, astonishing the invaders not less with this unexpected blow, than with the celerity with which he afterwards constructed a bridge to pass his army across the Arar, completing in one day a task which had occupied the barbarians twenty days. After he had crossed the river, Cæsar detected the treachery of Dumnorix, but forgave it, in consideration of the fidelity to the Romans exhibited by his brother Divitiacus. He then engaged in a decisive battle with the main body of the Helvetians, and after a severe contest defeated them with great slaughter. The vanquished submitted to the conqueror, and by Cæsar's order returned to their ancient posses-

sions, excepting only one tribe, called the Boii, who, at the intercession of the Æduans, were permitted by that tribe to settle in the territory of Autun, their junction being considered as a decided advantage.

Julius Cæsar having thus established the terror of his name by the conquest, and almost the annihilation, of the warlike Helvetians, was soon called to undertake a war, which, according to the belief of the Gauls, brought him in contact with adversaries still more formidable. Of this he was informed in a private council held by the Æduans. They acquainted him, that, according to the custom of the Gauls, who were constantly divided among themselves, a long feud had existed between them (the Æduans) and the Sequani, already frequently mentioned, aided by another powerful tribe, called the Arverni, situated on the Loire. Finding that their combined strength was unable to conquer the Æduans, these two tribes agreed to call to their assistance the warlike German nations which inhabited the opposite side of the Rhine, where that river bounded the country of the Gauls.

I must here briefly remind you, that though a part of Germany had been originally settled by the Celtic tribes, yet the successors of these first colonists had been at a subsequent period subdued, or banished, by a people so different in manners, language, religion, and even in form and countenance, as to present in their general appearance all the qualities of a different race. This great and most important division of mankind finally constituted

the grand source from which the modern nations of Europe have derived their principal materials of population, and the peculiarities of their several governments. They were generally termed Goths, having among themselves a great variety of distinctive names. They spoke another language, differing from and opposed to that of the Celts, insomuch that some writers have held them altogether different. They are found, however, by more accurate enquirers, so far connected as to warrant their being referred to a common source, at a period probably previous to the remarkable event described in Scripture as the Confusion of Tongues. The Goths did not follow the religion of the Celtic tribes, nor were they acquainted with the order of the Druids, neither did they acknowledge the existence or worship of Esus, the one and only deity of the Gauls. They worshipped the sun and the moon, to which they added several imaginary deities. They were much attached to the arts of divination, and as these were chiefly used by the matrons of the tribe, the females received, from this cause, as well as others presently to be mentioned, a degree of honour seldom paid to them by the males of barbarous tribes, who generally devolve on their women all labours save those of hunting and war.

This race of Goths possessed some qualities, which, in the eyes of barbarians, are of high value. They were large-limbed, tall, and of great personal strength, having generally red hair and blue eyes. Their chiefs only enjoyed command during the

time of war, and a species of princes, called kings by the Romans, were elected as their judges during peace; each of these magistrates had a council of one hundred persons, supported by the public. Their women, who held a high rank amongst them, were remarkable for their chaste and honourable character; and as no one was allowed to marry until he was one-and-twenty at least, their young men looked forward with anxiety and hope to a period when they should undertake the duties and dignities of men, and in the mean while practised those habits of self-restraint and subdued passions, which made them fit for the duties of manhood, when the period should arrive that they were permitted to assume the situation of a husband and a father. The women, on their part, finding themselves the universal objects of respect and attention, were necessarily prone to assume a higher and more lofty character in society, than is usually assigned to females in the savage state. They partook in the toils and dangers of war, accompanied their husbands in their expeditions, and when the battle was irretrievably lost, they often, by slaying themselves and their children, gave dreadful examples that they preferred death to slavery

The character of these Gothic tribes had something superior even to that of the Gauls; braver they could hardly be, but in war they were more steady, more persevering, could better endure the fatigues of a long and doubtful fight; and if inferior to the Gauls and other Celtic nations in the fury of a headlong onset, they possessed powers of

keeping their ground, and rallying, which rendered the event of the day doubtful, even after a long struggle. We can dimly perceive, by the history of ancient times, that the approach of these Goths from the east gradually overpowered and subdued the Celtic colonies who occupied Germany; some penetrating northwards into Scandinavia, while others rolled their emigration rather to the south and east, till their course was checked by the mountainous regions of Switzerland and the Tyrol, and by the broad course of the Rhine.

It followed, as a matter of course, that the fair regions of Gaul beyond this great river should become objects of covetousness to the Germans, whose crops were raised with difficulty, and who were as much strangers to wine as they were enamoured with the occasional use of it. It is not therefore wonderful, that the Germans, who were under the command of a powerful and haughty chief, named Ariovistus, should have willingly accepted the invitation of the Arverni and Sequani, to cross the Rhine, as I have told you, to assist them against the Æduans; nor was it surprising that Cæsar, foreseeing the danger of permitting these martial people to establish settlements beyond the great river which had hitherto been their barrier, willingly enquired into the nature of their proceeding, with the purpose of putting a stop to it. He soon learned that Ariovistus had already taken from the Sequani one-third of their territory, and occupied the lands with his people, while he demanded a third more for the accommodation of

reinforcements, which were about to join him from Germany.

When Cæsar applied to Ariovistus to know why he assaulted and injured the allies of the Roman people, the German prince returned him the contemptuous answer, that he had yet to learn what pretence Cæsar or the Romans could have for interfering with his operations in Gaul. The Romans marched against this new enemy; but the Gauls raised such exaggerated reports concerning the strength and ferocity of the Germans, as to infuse a sort of panic even into the legionary troops themselves. Cæsar, however, by his address and eloquence, soon put a stop to this. He declared that he himself would proceed on the expedition, though only the Tenth Legion should attend him. This select body of men were flattered by the praise and confidence of their general, while the rest were shamed out of their fears, and called out to be led against the enemy.

Cæsar then marched against Ariovistus, and after some manœuvres, forced the German prince to come to an action, in which he routed his whole army with great slaughter, eighty thousand Germans falling, and Ariovistus himself escaping with great difficulty across the Rhine.

By this decisive victory over the Germans, to whom the Gauls yielded the superiority in valour, the reputation of the Roman general was so highly raised, that it enabled him to assume the situation most convenient for reducing the whole country to the Roman obedience, which was the great object

to which he directed his whole attention. He became, or constituted himself, judge in the numerous quarrels which took place amid so many independent states. His decisions encouraged wars amongst them, which he so managed that the victory always fell to the side on which the Roman eagles were ranged. The Belgians, a people of Gaul who occupied modern Flanders, were the first to see in this supremacy of the Roman general the future seeds of absolute subjugation. This people, residing nearest to the Germans, and probably being rather of German than of Gallic descent, were remarkable above the proper Gauls for their courage and skill in war. Yet their alliance against the Romans was only the means of weakening their country by repeated invasions, and very bloody defeats, which increased the fame of Cæsar's arms, and rendered the other nations careful how they provoked a contest with a people whose attacks the most powerful nations of Gaul had proved unequal to sustain.

But although it was easy for Cæsar to maintain the office of a Governor of Gaul for a short time, yet the temper of that people, equally fierce and fickle, was scarcely subdued, or the country, as a Roman would have said, half pacified, before they were again forming plans and alliances together for the purpose of throwing off the yoke of Rome. Ten years of the active life of Cæsar were spent in constant labour to reduce Gaul to the condition of a Roman province, but for a long time with very

little success; for no sooner did there appear a show of tranquillity, than it became the signal of wider combinations against the foreigners than had taken place before. It was in vain that Cæsar laid aside the clemency which he practised, both from policy, and as most agreeable to his own temper. It was in vain, that in one action the river Aisne was so filled up and gorged with the dead bodies of the Gauls, that the corpses served as a bridge to their comrades who escaped from the slaughter. The victory only led to a more terribly obstinate struggle with the Nervii and other Belgic clans. Fifty thousand of a nation called Aduatici were sold at once for slaves. All these, and other severities, did not prevent a more powerful and almost universal insurrection against the Romans, in which the Æduans themselves, the constant friends of Rome, wearied out by exactions of various kinds, did not refuse to join. The chief of the league, whose name was Vercingetorix, after many brave exploits, was at length made prisoner, and Cæsar remained finally triumphant.

The wars of Gaul, of which this is a very hasty and imperfect review, terminated by the storming of a very strong fortress, called Uxellodunum, where Cæsar cruelly commanded the right hands of all the garrison who were fit to bear arms to be struck off.

The nature of the labours undergone by Cæsar will best appear from Plutarch's catalogue of his victories. "In less than ten years, during the

Gallic war," says that biographer, " Cæsar took more than eighty cities by storm, subdued three hundred states or communities, and fought upon different occasions with no less than thirteen millions of men, one million of whom had fallen in battle, and another had been taken captive and driven into slavery." The marvel in this report will be greatly diminished, if the reader recollects that Cæsar seldom encountered one nation of Gauls without the aid of auxiliaries, money, and provisions from the others with whom he was in alliance at the time; and thus, though it was the head of the Roman general which conducted the campaign, yet, considering the actual character of the soldiers engaged, Gaul was principally overcome by the disunion of her own native forces.

In the 49th year before the Christian era, Cæsar returned to Rome to exercise, against the liberties of his own countrymen, those troops, and that discipline, which had been so admirably formed during ten years' wars against the Gauls. In this manner, Providence makes our own crimes the means of bringing on our punishment. The unjust ambition of the Romans was the proximate cause of their own loss of freedom. The effects produced upon Gaul by the conquest of the Romans will form the subject of the next chapter, which will bring us down to the time when the reviving free spirit of Europe began to burst asunder, and cast from her, the fetters of Rome; or rather, when Rome herself, who had deprived

so many nations of their freedom, and who had so absolutely lost her own, found she had at the same time lost her hardihood, her discipline, and her powers of conflict, and lay exposed to the mercy of her own armies, like the fabled hunter to the attack of his own hounds.

CHAPTER II.

Policy of the Romans towards the conquered Tribes—Human Sacrifice forbidden — Polytheism Introduced—Human Victims secretly sacrificed by the Druids —Plans of Insurrection agitated at these Solemnities— Combination among the Gallic Provinces against Rome—Expedition of Drusus—Insurrection of Vindex in Nero's time—its Suppression—Persecution of Christians in Gaul in the reign of Severus— Origin of the Franks—Inroads of the Franks into the Roman Provinces in the time of Posthumus and Gallienus — The Allemanni defeated, and Peace for a time restored to Gaul, by Julian the Apostate—Radagaisus, King of the Goths, invades Italy, is taken captive with part of his Army—the rest of his Forces invade and ravage Gaul.

When Rome seized upon the dominions of an independent state, she usually prevailed on the suffering party to rest satisfied with some mess of pottage, like Esau in the Scriptures, in place of what may be justly termed the most precious birthright of humanity, excepting that spiritual benediction which the eldest-born of Jacob so rashly exchanged for a dish of food.

Rome professed to give to the conquered states her protection, her acknowledgment of the authority of their magistrates, with perhaps a golden diadem, a curule chair of ivory, or some other em-

blem of more show than use; the true sense of which toys implied, that the laws, ordinances, and authorities of the once free country could not now be said to exist, unless in so far as they were acknowledged by Rome. The various cities, states, or provinces throughout Gaul, were all subjected to Rome; but the nature of the connexion they bore to her varied according to the circumstances of surrender. Some cities or commonwealths were permitted to retain a nominal freedom; others were termed confederates of the Roman people; while others were reduced to the condition of a province, to which a Roman governor was appointed, with full power over the property and persons of the unhappy natives. But in all those cases, whether the subjugated Gauls were mocked with the name of freemen or confederates, or called in plain terms subjects, the Roman legions alike occupied their strongholds. A capitation tax was levied for the benefit of the Republic, and the children of the soil, forcibly arrayed as soldiers, were made to serve in different countries, so that, having lost their own freedom, they might be used as tools to deprive other nations of theirs.

But the vain and imaginary distinctions comprehended in these various orders of subjugation were soon entirely melted down, and Gaul finally merged into sixteen grand divisions, called provinces, an arrangement which, it is believed, was made under the reign of Augustus; for so short a time were the Romans disposed to respect the veil of decency which they themselves had in the com-

mencement thought it necessary to throw over their conquest.

What, then, you may be tempted to ask, did the conquered Gauls obtain in exchange for the right of managing their own affairs, which the Romans had wrested from them? In reply, it cannot be denied that the coin in which the Republic of Rome paid for her aggressions was not all false money. It was her boast to extend some degree of civilisation among the prostrate vassals of her empire, and to impress on them a milder species of spiritual rites than that which had animated them in their days of savage freedom. With this view, the abominable mode of worship by human sacrifice was forbidden through the Gallic states, so soon as they had bent the knee to Rome. In abolishing this wretched and barbarous custom, whatever might be the intention of the Romans, there can be no doubt that the morals of the people were proportionally amended. Nor, when it is considered what species of priestcraft was exercised by the Druids, and how much they strove to keep their votaries in ignorance in order to increase their own power, can we blame the means by which the Romans endeavoured to diminish that power, although the actual cause of their doing so was the reiterated efforts of this peculiar priesthood to inflame their countrymen against the yoke of the conquerors.

But if the injunctions of Rome were highly laudable in prohibiting the practice of human sacrifices, and were in a great measure salutary, as tending to loosen the fetters which an ambitious

priesthood had fixed on the people, other innovations which they introduced upon the Gallic creed were of a different nature, calculated to destroy the simplicity of their primitive worship, which, although erroneous, was founded upon the grand principle of acknowledging one sole divinity. The Druids resisted these innovations at first with tolerable success, for it is said that no temples were built in Gaul until the time of Tiberius, when a general tax, or census, over the whole country, was proposed at Rome, and only abandoned on the chiefs of Gaul consenting to erect a temple to the memory of Cæsar, and for the adoration of Augustus. Thus, as associates in the throne of the single deity, Esus, in whom, no doubt, they recognised, though imperfectly, the unity and power of the Creator of all things, were placed that very Julius Cæsar, who had been the invader and tyrant of their country, and that Augustus himself, the cruelties of whose early life were combined with the brutal pollutions of his later years.

Polytheism, or a multiplicity of deities, being thus introduced into Gaul, that belief took root and throve among the people to a most wonderful degree. The rich exhausted their fortunes in building temples, either to the gods recognised by the Romans, but fancifully distinguished by other epithets and attributes; or to imaginary deities, whom they had sanctified according to their own wild fancy. Another melancholy effect of this perversion to the grossest errors of paganism, was, that whilst the Gauls imbibed all the superstitions

of idolatry and polytheism, and renounced the approach which they had made to the grand truth that the world was created and governed by one great being, they retained at the same time their custom of human sacrifice.

These infernal rites, the worst part of the original worship of the Druidical system, the Gauls continued to practise in secret, in defiance of the edicts of the Emperors for abolishing them, thus perversely retaining what was inhuman and cruel in their original system, and adopting from that of their victors the whole childish puerilities of a superstition which the Romans had been borrowing for so many centuries from every country, whenever any thing could be found to interweave into their own creed. But it must not be supposed that the human victims of the Druidical system were, after the conquest of Gaul, sacrificed in the temples which they had erected after the fashion of the Romans. It would appear that animal sacrifices alone were allowed within these new places of worship; for it is scarcely to be believed that the Gauls should transgress the edict of the conquerors, under the eye of their garrisons, or governors. The people, who, looking back to the days of their freedom, desired to worship as they had formerly worshipped, met by appointment in some dark recess of unfrequented woods, under the direction of the Druids, who resumed, at such secret conclaves, the power which they were no longer permitted to exercise in public. Bearing on their heads the coronet of oak leaves, which

they esteemed sacred—clad in white robes, as was their custom, the ancient priests then met the people in the deep forest, to adore in secrecy and silence, according to the rites of their forefathers. The victim who fell under the axe of the sacrificing priest, or who, sometimes bound to a tree, was shot to death with arrows, was usually a criminal who had deserved death, or some individual of small account, who had been kidnapped and reserved for this inhuman purpose. At other times it was a voluntary victim, who offered himself as an expiatory offering for the sins of the people, like the scape-goat of the Israelites. When an individual could be worked up to such a point of insane patriotism, the Druids announced to him, as his reward, eternal happiness in the society of the gods, to propitiate whom he consented to suffer death; and the people, if circumstances permitted, took care that he whose sacrifice was to be the price of the public welfare, should, for some time before his death, taste of as many of the pleasures of this life as they had the means of procuring him. His death then took place by the hands of the consecrated Druids. They observed every circumstance of his mortal agony; the manner in which he fell; the course of his blood down the rugged front of the sacred stone: and from these circumstances affected to divine how far the deity was propitious to their designs. It may be well believed that, at these secret meetings, the bards were also called in to heighten, by music and melody, the impression which was made on the assembly by the elo-

quence and mystic predictions of the priests. The themes naturally chosen were the ancient glory of Gaul and her inhabitants, who, having been long the terror of distant countries, were now found unable to protect their own against the Romans. The feelings of the hearers, a nation readily excited, passionately fond of fame, their prejudices easily acted upon by the gloomy fanaticism of their priests, and their quick fierce tempers, resentful of the injuries received from the Romans, became much agitated by such solemnities, and it was not to be wondered at that general schemes of revolt were laid or extended at such meetings.

Besides these internal plans of insurrection against the foreign yoke, the vicinity of the free Germans, and their incursions and conquests upon the Gallic territory, were another vexation which instigated the inhabitants to revolt. The Gauls had a right to complain, that while the Romans assumed the title of their masters, and drained the provinces of the youth with whom they could have maintained their own defence, they left them exposed to the inroads of a barbarous and formidable enemy.

These dissensions produced very general convulsions throughout Gaul, in the year 741 after the foundation of Rome. The various states and principalities of the whole sixteen subdivisions or provinces, communicated and combined together. Drusus, who was sent by the emperor to still these commotions, had art and authority sufficient to convoke all the Gallic chiefs and principal magistrates

at Lyons, under pretence of dedicating the temple to Augustus, which we have already noticed. Here by promises and actual benefits, he managed to disconcert the plot of the disaffected. And as he proceeded across the Rhine, and repulsed the Germans, the time when the Gauls might have at least shaken off the Roman yoke passed away in inactivity.

In the year of the Christian era 78, during the reign of the tyrant Nero, an opportunity occurred, when the Gauls, by the rise of an enterprising leader, were very near accomplishing their often meditated project of general insurrection. The leader, according to Dion Cassius, named Caius Julius Vindex, was the son of a Romanized Gaul, whose father had become a Roman senator. He was descended from the line of one of the ancient kings of Aquitaine, endowed with great strength of body, and wisdom; above all, an accomplished soldier.

Availing himself of the discontent produced by the cruel exactions of the tyrant, Vindex, who was governor of Celtic Gaul, ascended the tribunal, and in an animated oration denounced the vices of Nero, his cruelties, his infamies, the death of his mother by his orders, and the crimes which to this day cling to his memory, as one of the most depraved monsters that ever existed. He called upon his hearers, not to rise in insurrection against the Roman empire, but to combine for the more limited purpose of removing Nero from the government. The people, being already greatly

exasperated, took arms at this exhortation, and Vindex was soon at the head of one hundred thousand men. It is said that Nero was rather pleased than alarmed by this formidable insurrection, conceiving it would afford his treasury great wealth from the forfeited estates of the insurgents. He placed a reward of two hundred and fifty myriads of drachms upon the head of Vindex. When this was told to the daring leader, he replied, "To whomsoever will deliver to me the head of Nero, I will be contented to resign my own life in return, for having destroyed so great an enemy of the human race." But of all Vindex's reproaches, Nero was most moved by that in which the Gallic insurgent called him a wretched fiddler. Leaving the topic of his mother's death, and similar horrors, he complained bitterly to the Roman people of the aspersions thrown out against his taste and power as a musical performer; and, that the Romans might judge how little they were deserved, he introduced a voluntary or two into the oration which he delivered on that occasion.

Mean time, Virgilius Rufus, a Roman general who commanded on the banks of the Rhine, advanced against Vindex. It was thought the two commanders would have come to an understanding; but the armies approaching each other, skirmishes ensued, which led to a general action, in which Vindex was defeated, with the loss of twenty thousand men. Hurried on by a species of despair, of which the ancient Romans were but too suscep-

tible, the defeated general killed himself just before the time of Nero's dethronement and death.

After the death of Vindex, there is little worthy of notice in the history of Gaul, except that, like other provinces of the empire, it suffered the most severe and tyrannical exactions at the hands of the Roman governors; and that the generals who commanded there often assumed the purple, and gave place, by their ambition, to wars, of which Gaul became the scene. The Gauls were, for example, among the first to recognise as emperor the celebrated Septimius Severus, who, in beginning his career of ambition, was governor of the province of Lyons. The last scene of the civil war which completed the elevation of Severus to the imperial throne, was the defeat of his rival Albinus, at a place called Timurteum, about twenty leagues from Lyons. A severe, but local persecution of the Christians disturbed Gaul under the reign of this able emperor, originating in the refusal of a Christian soldier to wear a crown or coronet, delivered to him as a donation, agreeably to the command of his general, but which a religious dread of committing idolatry prohibited him from making use of. St Irenæus, the bishop of Lyons, fell, among other martyrs, about the year of God 202.

As the Roman empire began now to totter towards its fall, different barbarous nations, whom by force of arms she had first compelled to retire from her boundaries, began to thicken around her

in some instances with the purpose of mere ravage and plunder, in others, with the more resolved intent of making conquests and settlements within the imperial territory. Three of the nations or coalitions of tribes, who had regarded Gaul as their natural conquest, require to be distinguished from each other. The most remarkable, from their becoming the corner-stone of the great monarchy to which they afforded a name, are the Franks, the undoubted founders of the present kingdom of France. From whence the people were derived, whose memory has been preserved by such distinction, has been the subject of much discussion.

In olden times, a fanciful origin was imagined for the Franks, which England had also adopted, namely, that they were the descendants of the Trojans of classical antiquity. At a later period, Pannonia and Gaul were fixed upon as the native country of the Franks. But a more probable opinion has gained ground in later days, which has been generally recommended by its simplicity. The Germans, the most formidable enemies of Rome since the days of Cæsar, repeatedly defeated by the discipline of the Romans, but always resisting them, and often victorious in their turn, are supposed, about the middle of the third century, to have formed a new association or alliance among their eastern tribes, for the purpose of mutual defence, to which, in token of their love of liberty and their resolution to maintain it, they gave the name of Franks, or Freemen, though each tribe was individually known from the others by its own name.

In this confederacy, they at first acknowledged no supreme head, nor was authority assumed by any one state over the others. The purest equality, and the plan of acting for each other's mutual support, seem to have been at once the object and the conditions of the confederacy. This formidable people commenced a series of furious incursions upon Gaul, which the Romans, under Gallienus and Posthumus, endeavoured to repel, in a long series of bloody wars, and in which both parties unquestionably sustained great losses. The province itself suffered greatly from the military operations, being necessarily exposed to the ravages of both parties, whether Romans or Franks. Indeed, notwithstanding the opposition of Gallienus and Posthumus, the south-eastern provinces of Gaul were so cruelly ravaged, that they afforded little spoil to the invaders; so that latterly the Franks only used them as a road to the Pyrenees, and from thence into Spain, which, unharassed as yet by similar invasions, offered a spoil far more tempting. They even seized upon vessels, and crossed to Africa, where they also found provinces plentiful of spoil, and colonies little acquainted with the art of war.

The Franks, who thus laid waste by rapid excursions the provinces of the Roman Empire, had yet a country which they called their own, where they resided, when they chose for a time to abide at rest. To their original settlements on the eastern or German side of the Rhine they had added a considerable tract, called at that time Toxandria,

which appears to have comprehended great part of the present province of Brabant, their habitations being in woods and morasses, or on the adjacent banks of lakes and rivers, as they could best surround them with rude fortifications, formed out of the trunks of trees.

There was another and separate confederation, resembling that of the Franks, and instituted upon similar principles, of which the Suevi formed the main strength; a tribe so much esteemed for courrage by the neighbouring nations, that the Germans told Cæsar even the immortal gods could scarcely match them in fight. This brave people comprehended, besides, so many members, that they assumed the title of Allemanni, or All-men, to mark the comprehensive principle of general union on which their league rested. Besides making distant and extensive excursions, one of which brought them almost to the gates of Rome itself, which was in great danger of falling into their hands, they, like the Franks, had a fixed abode. This second confederacy of the German tribes had their settlements on the eastern banks of the Upper Rhine; and their vicinity was not less formidable to Gaul than that of the Franks.

About the year 357, Julian, who, from his renouncing the Christian religion, obtained the hateful epithet of the *Apostate*, was sent, with very insufficient forces, to rescue Gaul from the ravages of the barbarians, and discharged his duty with unexpected success. He defeated the Allemanni in the battle of Strasburg, and after obtaining this

victory, he crossed the Rhine three times, and upon each occasion took forts, won battles, or gained other successes; so that Gaul was for a time relieved from the incursions of these barbarous enemies, and, with the assistance of Julian, its towns were rebuilt, and its prosperity re-established.

The historian Gibbon, who, from his enmity to the Christian religion, shews a great desire to make a hero out of Julian, has not, it is true, said more than enough in praise of his talents. But though certainly a prince of lively parts, and great personal activity, we cannot attribute soundness of understanding to the man of education, who could prefer the mysterious jargon of Plato's philosophy, and the coarse polytheism of the heathen religion, to the pure simplicity of the gospel.

The provinces of Gaul shared for some time the advantages procured by the active talents of Julian; and it would seem, that although the Franks were celebrated for a rude and fickle temper, yet for a period of years they remained faithful to Rome; a fidelity which was probably purchased by occasional subsidies. They even resisted the strong temptation of an opportunity to break their alliance with the Romans, in the great invasion of Rhodagast or Radagaisus, which may be said in its event altogether to have destroyed the very slight remains of the Roman empire, excepting in Italy itself. This barbarian prince had collected an immense army from the shores of the Baltic sea, in which so many were sprung of pure Gothic descent,

that the name of king of the Goths was generally, though inaccurately, given to their commander. The Vandals, the Suevi, the Burgundians, joined his standard. But though the western Emperor Honorius was a timid and inefficient prince, his minister, Stilicho, a man of ambition, warlike skill, and political talent, with an army, the last apparently which he could raise, came upon the king of the Goths while he was engaged in the siege of Florence, and, by a hasty circumvallation, surrounded the besiegers, who, in their turn, were besieged, reduced to a starving condition, and obliged to surrender.

But though Radagaisus and his host were made captive, yet two-thirds of his original forces, amounting to one hundred thousand men, were still in arms in the north of Italy. It is said that Stilicho insinuated to them the advice to attack Gaul, as perhaps the only means by which he could relieve Italy of such unwelcome guests. They took the hint accordingly, and, ascending the Alps at different points, and approaching the Rhine on various quarters, appeared as invaders on the frontiers of Gaul. In this exploit, those who attacked Gaul from the Upper Rhine experienced neither assistance nor opposition from the Allemanni. But the Vandals, whose great numbers had enabled, or perhaps obliged, them to separate from the barbaric host, approached the territories occupied by the Franks, on the lower part of the river. The Franks, faithful to their engagements with the Romans, advanced in arms to oppose them,

and in the battle which ensued twenty thousand Vandals were slain. But the arrival of the Alani, another nation of barbarians, who came up during the conflict, compelled the Franks to retreat, and to desist from the defence of the river, to which their numbers were unequal. Without further opposition then, the roving barbarians, consisting of several tribes, the remains of the army of Radagaisus, crossed the Rhine, which was then frozen, and carried fire and sword into the rich country, which had in a few years recovered from the devastations of the Franks and Allemanni, and reduced it again to a smoking desert, never more to assume the name of a civilized province of Rome, but to remain the theatre in which contending races of barbarians were to exercise themselves against each other in bloody conflict. This invasion of Gaul took place in 407.

CHAPTER III.

Successive Tribes of Barbarians by whom Europe was overrun—the Celts its original Settlers—Invasions of the Goths, Sarmatians, and Alani—Irruption of the Huns, who settle in the Eastern parts of Germany—Wars of Attila with the Eastern Empire—League between Ætius, the Roman Patrician, and Theodoric, King of the Goths —Attila invades Gaul, and besieges Orleans—Ætius and Theodoric advance against him, and defeat his Army in the battle of Chalons—the Victors suffer the defeated army to retreat, without molestation—Death of Attila—Extinction of the Western Empire—Erection of Italy into a Kingdom.

Gaul could be no longer considered as an appendage to the Roman empire, if indeed the empire itself could be said still to exist. The province was filled with tribes of barbarians of Gothic or Celtic descent, carrying on desultory warfare with each other, which having neither a permanent result nor motive, becomes of as little consequence to history, as, to use an expression of Milton, the battles of the kites and the crows. The name of Rome was still used in these scenes of confusion; Ætius, the minister and general of Valentinian III., a man of courage, doubtless, but who had no means to follow up his attempts to reclaim the pro-

vince of Gaul from the barbarous hordes by which it had been ravaged, save by the arms of others yet more barbarous, made, nevertheless, by the aid of such auxiliaries, a considerable stand. We are compelled to notice one or two of the more important nations, to whom some degree of settled government had given the appearance of a certain advancement in social life.

The Franks are in this case to be peculiarly attended to, as in their descendants we must look for the founders of the powerful kingdom of France. We have already seen that they occupied both sides of the Rhine in its lower course, and at first opposed the remains of Radagaisus's army, till overpowered by the joint force of the Vandals and the other hordes. The Franks seem then to have resolved to seize upon a share of the prize which they could no longer defend. They advanced their banners accordingly, and amidst the general confusion, found no difficultiy in adding to their western frontier a large portion of territory, comprehending nearly two of the sixteen prætorian Governments, into which the Romans had divided Gaul. At this period they had established kingly government by hereditary descent in the Merovingian family. While the rest of the Franks shaved the hair on the back part of the head, these princes allowed it to descend in long curls over their shoulders, from whence they acquired the title of Long-haired Kings. Their dominions extended as far westward as the eastern bank of the Somme.

The Goths, meaning that part of them called Visigoths, or Western Goths, had established themselves in the province of Gascony, and the adjacent parts of Spain; and their chief, Theodoric, a prince of great resolution, having been converted with his subjects to the Christian faith, had shown more wisdom and strength of mind than were usually the attributes of barbaric princes. With Theodoric, Ætius, the Roman general, made war, as one by whose arms Gaul was most likely to be detached from the empire. But a common enemy was approaching, of a power so formidable as to compel both parties to unite in resisting him.

The latter days of the Roman empire were marked by many of those emigrations upon a great scale, by which the nations who were put in motion were precipitated upon such as remained quiet, with the impulse of a river in inundation, overwhelming or bearing before them the settlements of former ages, and sometimes destroying all memory of their existence. Thus had one race succeeded another in Europe. The Celts had been its original settlers; the Goths, more strong, wise, and powerful, had driven this primitive people into the retreats of the mountains and valleys, where their remains are still to be found. The Sarmatian race also showed itself amid these successive revolutions; and the Alani, sometimes the scourge, sometimes the protectors, of the Roman provinces, were of the third great family, who were distinguished by a language and manners considerably different from those of the Goths, and their prede-

cessors the Celts. But this unhappy period, the fourth and fifth centuries, was yet to see and suffer the remorseless rage of a fourth division of mankind, a race yet different from those by whom they had hitherto suffered. It seemed the will of Heaven, perhaps to punish the wickedness of the Roman people, that so fast as one horde of barbarians had begun to settle into peaceful inhabitants of the regions which they had wasted, new bands arrived from the extremities of the earth to renew the devastations, which had become more unfrequent; and between the fresh invaders and their precursors, there was so little of connexion, or possibility of alliance, that they did not even understand each other's language. A remarkable feature of this extraordinary course of events, was the unexpected appearance of a countless army of Asiatics on the borders of the still harassed Eastern Empire.

This extraordinary emigration had arisen out of convulsions so far to the eastward as the Great Wall, by which the Chinese emperors endeavoured in vain to protect themselves against the Tartars of the desert. Whatever was the original cause of communicating a movement so general, it must have been of a most formidable character, since it acted so widely upon the bosom of the Great Desert. Myriads of the mounted Tartar tribes collected together, dragging or driving on each other, and poured on to the westward, as if directed by the instinct of the locust-swarm, which holds undeviatingly on its destined track to the country

which it is called to ravage and destroy. Wherever this tide of armed emigration came, it struck universal terror. Their numbers were in themselves great, and the rapidity with which their equestrian habits enabled them to move, magnified them into innumerable shoals. Nor was their external appearance less terrible than their numerical force. The Gothic and German tribes had shown the astonished provincials a strength of limb, and a loftiness of stature, seemingly beyond the usual growth. On the other hand, the Huns, as these new invaders were called, were dwarfish in stature, and their limbs, though strongly formed, exhibited a disproportion to each other, which almost amounted to deformity. Their countenances were of the cast commonly called Chinese; and their small sparkling eyes, deep sunk beneath the skull, were placed at a distance from each other on the extremities of an unnatural breadth of forehead, while a flat nose and a large mouth added peculiar hideousness to the wild and frightful expression of the face. Their manners were as brutal and ferocious as their appearance. Under the arbitrary rule of their chiefs, they became familiarized with all the evils which despotism usually teaches its subjects to inflict, and to submit to. In short, if we could implicitly trust the accounts transmitted to us, it is impossible for mortals more to have resembled demons in features and actions, than did these hordes of Tartar savages, who appeared in Europe towards the end of the fourth century.

The Gothic tribes that inhabited the northern bank of the Danube, were the first to experience the furious attack of these new enemies, and were so much struck with terror, that, like one wave pursued by another, the great body of them rushed towards the banks of the Danube, imploring permission to take shelter under the protection of the Roman Emperor of the East, from the tide of barbarians pouring upon them from the deserts of Tartary. Their prayer was granted, and thus the Goths were incautiously admitted within the limits of the empire; but, as at the same time, the venal lieutenants of the frontier treated them with harshness and injustice, the incensed strangers became the most formidable enemies to its tranquillity. They never again left the territory of the empire, but remained there, sometimes in the character of avowed enemies, at others, in that of doubtful auxiliaries and friends, changing their relations as often as caprice or desire of gain could afford a motive for doing so.

The Huns, whose approach had impressed so much terror on the Goths, and constrained that redoubted nation to take refuge within the Roman territory, did not themselves take the same direction with the fugitives. They took undisturbed possession of Hungary, to which they gave their name, and of great part of eastern Germany. These fertile regions seemed sufficient for their wants, and the incursions they then made upon the empire of the East were not of a grand or terrific charac-

ter. It may be conjectured, that at that period the power of this wandering people was not concentrated in the hands of one head, and that their thousand tribes lived for the time each under the dominion of its own chief, in consequence of which the strength of the whole nation was not readily brought to exert itself.

But in 433, we find the forces of the Huns again combined under the guidance of one well qualified to wield a power so tremendous. This was Attila, or Etzell, as he is called by German tradition, surnamed by his terrified contemporaries the Scourge of God. By the ferocious activity of his followers, actively seconding his own natural disposition, he was enabled to make good the inhuman boast, that grass never grew on the spot over which he passed. His first wars were with the Eastern empire, from which he exacted a large yearly tribute, besides an extensive cession of territory, and obliging Theodosius, then Emperor of the East, to submit to the most humiliating demands. His protection was eagerly sought after by Ætius, called the Patrician, already mentioned, who obtained, by the influence of the King of the Huns, the highest position of power and trust at the court of Valentinian. But Ætius forgot gratitude in the virtue of patriotism. A.D. 433.

Attila, after hesitating whether he should attack the Eastern or Western Empire, and after having insulted the weakness of both, determined at last to pour upon Gaul the terrors of a Tartar invasion.

Ætius, so much was the pride of Rome fallen, could only attempt to defend the Roman province against the barbarians of the east, by forming an alliance with one of those nations of barbarians which issued from the north. I have already told you that the Visigoths, or Gothic tribes of the west, were in possession of Aquitaine, and had fixed their capital at Toulouse. This powerful nation was commanded by Theodoric, the son of a king of the Goths called Alaric, and the policy of Ætius induced him to obtain the aid of the Gothic king for the defence of Gaul against the Huns. These Tartars advanced with all their tribes; and Attila, whose policy, like that of most barbarians, consisted chiefly in cunning and duplicity, alternately flattered Ætius and Theodoric with his friendship, and threatened them with his formidable enmity; thus preventing them, for a time, from combining their forces for the common safety, by suggesting to each that the peril respected the other alone. While thus amusing Theodoric and Ætius, Attila, by a march seldom equalled, passed from Hungary to Gaul, crossed the Rhine by a bridge of boats, penetrated into the centre of the province of Gaul, which he wasted, and laid siege to the important town of Orleans. But mutual alarm had now accomplished that union between the Roman patrician and the valiant Gothic monarch, which mutual distrust had so long impeded. Theodoric raised a powerful army, and appeared at its head; Ætius called to arms the other bar-

barous people in Gaul, who still set some value on the name of Roman Confederates, and among them brought to the field Merovæus, the long-haired king of the Franks, though Attila called that nation his allies. Having formed the plan of their campaign, the allies marched forward with such rapidity, that they wellnigh surprised Attila while he was engaged in the attack on Orleans. On their approach, he was compelled to raise the siege, and, recrossing the river Seine, concentrated his immense clouds of cavalry near Chalons, in the province of Champagne. The Goths, with the army of Ætius, advanced against him, and the crisis seemed to approach, in which the fate of battle was to decide to which race this fair portion of Europe was in future to belong. Both were barbarians; but the Goths having received the Christian faith, had at the same time adopted some of the attendant doctrines of morality, which mitigated the ferocity of their natural manners. But even before they enjoyed these inestimable advantages, they possessed as much superiority over the Tartars in the turn of their mind and manners, as in their stately and well-formed persons, presenting a most advantageous contrast in all respects with their mishapen and fiendish-looking enemies. They were a people accustomed to pride themselves in subduing and resisting the brutal impulses of their nature, without which power of restraint man is levelled with the beasts that perish. The Huns, on the contrary, wallowed in every pleasure that could

gratify their animal instinct. The plurality of wives in which they indulged, produced among them all the usual consequences of degradation of the female sex, and indifference between the parents and the offspring. The battle of Chalons, therefore, fought in the year 450, was disputed with an obstinacy and fury, befitting the great stake for which these fearless nations, on fire with rivalry, and each proud of its ancient name, pursued the bloody game of war. The aged, but valiant King of the Goths, Theodoric, was killed in the front of the battle, but his place being bravely filled by his eldest son, Torrismond, the impetuous career of his followers was not checked, and Attila himself was compelled, by the strength and fury of the Goths, to seek a retreat among his waggons, which, after the Scythian custom, were sometimes the means of transporting their families, and sometimes their fortification against a prevailing enemy. The troops which sustained the once formidable name of Romans suffered greatly, and Ætius, their leader, was separated from his soldiers, and with difficulty found refuge in the camp of his allies. But such a battle was dreadful to the victors as well as to the vanquished, and the Goths and Romans judged it more prudent to suffer Attila to effect a sullen and slow retreat, watched by a part of their army, than to risk the glory of their hard-won victory, in an attempt to cut off the retreat of the Tartar prince. Attila arrived in the northern parts of Italy, with-

A. D. 451.

out having, in his retreat, suffered any considerable abatement of power, or by his defeat lost much of his renown. He died not long after, and with him expired the formidable empire of the Huns. Shortly after this event the Western Empire was entirely extinguished, and a kingdom of Italy erected in its place.

CHAPTER IV.

Conquests of Clovis — his Conversion to Christianity — War between him and Alaric, King of the Visigoths — Defeat of the Goths at Poitiers — Laws and Customs of the Franks — Death of Clovis — Division of his Empire among his Sons — The Saracens invade France, and are repulsed by Charles Martel — The Merovingian Race of Kings deposed by Pepin, Founder of the Carlovingian Dynasty — Conquests of Charlemagne — Division of the Empire among his Successors — Invasion of the Northmen, or Normans — Charles the Fat.

[486—888]

I HAVE already fixed your attention upon the Franks, as the people who were destined to become the founders of modern France. But the original extent of their dominions was small, and the increase of their power slow; nor did they for a length of time bear much comparison with the Burgundians, who occupied the south-east of France, or with the still more numerous Visigoths, who repulsed the formidable host under Attila. We have already given some account of them and their long-haired kings, who were called after Merovæus, the ally of Ætius and of Theodoric at the famous battle of Chalons. But in his time the Franks can only be said to have kept their ground. In the time of Clovis (which is the same name

with Louis, the *chl* of the Celtic tribes resembling the aspirated consonant *hl*), the power of the nation made great advances, rather by the address and ability of the monarch, than by the superior valour of his followers, though the Franks were allowed to be among the bravest of the German tribes who invaded Gaul. Such of the Gallic colonists as still chose to retain the name of Romans endeavoured to embody themselves under the command of one Syagrius, who established his headquarters at Soissons. But Clovis, with his warlike Franks, commenced his career of conquest by defeating him; and obtaining possession of his person, caused him to be beheaded, and seized upon his dominions, which added to the territories of the Franks the provinces of Gaul betwixt the Rhine and the Loire. A. D. 486.

But Clovis's destiny was principally determined by his adopting the Christian faith. The chief agent in his conversion was his queen, Clotilda, niece of Gundobald, King of Burgundy, his neighbour and ally. By her affectionate exhortations, the mind of her husband was disposed to Christianity, though he long hesitated to embrace a religion which imposed so many restrictions. At length, in a battle with the Allemanni, often already mentioned as holding the upper part of the Rhine, Clovis, hard pressed, was induced to vow, that if he should obtain a victory, which seemed extremely doubtful, he would become a Christian. The king of the Allemanni was slain, his army discomfited, and the acquisition of his dominions greatly aug-

mented the power of the Franks. After this conquest, Clovis adopted the Christian faith, according to his vow, and was baptized A.D. 496. in the cathedral of Rheims, where it has been ever since the custom to crown and consecrate the monarchs of France.

Burgundy, the country of his wife, was afterwards subjected by Clovis, who united the qualities of a dexterous politician, an accomplished soldier, and, we must add, an ambitious and unscrupulous man: by such characters are kingdoms acquired, and their limits augmented. Gundobald was attacked and defeated, and after his death, his son Sigismond was taken and put to death; the sons of Clovis causing him and his family to be thrown into a well.

But, before the conquest of Burgundy was perfected, a war broke out between Clovis and the Visigoths, the same nation which, in the time of Theodoric, had assisted in defeating Attila at the battle of Chalons. These Visigoths were Arians, that is, they held the doctrines of a clergyman called Arius, which are contrary to those accepted by the Catholic Church, and therefore considered heretical. Unhappily for both sides, the Christians of those early ages were more disposed to make such differences in speculative opinion the grounds for persecuting each other, than to act up to the great precept of the Gospel, which commands us to love our neighbour as ourselves.

The Visigoths were at this time governed by a prince called Alaric, who was stirred, doubtless, by

the blood of his renowned ancestor of the same name, and jealous of the growing conquests of the Catholic Clovis. The two monarchs met as friends upon an island in the Loire, which now divided their dominions. But it is remarkable how seldom such interviews serve to prolong peace and good understanding betwixt princes. They feasted together, and parted in appearance as friends, but with mutual rancour at heart. Clovis held a council of his barons ;—"Let not these Arian heretics," he said, "longer enjoy the choicest portion of Gaul!" He was answered by loud acclamations, and, to give evidence of his own zeal, rode to the front of his nobles, and darting his battle-axe forward with a strong arm and desperate aim, exclaimed, "Where my francisca" (the name which the Franks gave to their war-axes) "alights, there will I dedicate a church to the blessed St Peter, Prince of the Apostles, and to his holy brethren!" The weapon lighted on the spot where Clovis afterwards erected the Great Church, now called that of St Genevieve, formerly of St Peter and St Paul.

Under these auspices, Clovis advanced against Alaric, who appeared at the head of an army of Goths, far superior to that of the Franks. In the anxiety of the moment, Clovis sought to propitiate the celestial host by magnificent promises, and more particularly addressed himself to St Martin of Tours, who had been an active instrument in the general conversion of Gaul. He made a vow, in the event of success, to dedicate to that saint his

favourite charger, perhaps of all things in the world that which he loved most dearly. The King of the Franks joined battle with Alaric, near Poitiers, where the usual good fortune of Clovis prevailed. He showed his personal gallantry in the pursuit, and, attaching himself to the person of Alaric, slew him with his own lance, while at the same time he made his escape with difficulty from two desperate Gothic champions, who united to avenge their monarch's death by that of his conqueror. The risk which Clovis had eluded by his own dexterity and the excellent qualities of his charger, endeared the noble animal to him, and being anxious to repurchase him from the saint, he with that view offered the price of one hundred golden pieces as an equivalent. But he was displeased to learn that St Martin had vindicated his property, and that the steed would not stir from his stable till redeemed at a higher rate by his secular master. "An excellent friend in time of need, this St Martin," said the King, somewhat fretted at the saint's tenacity; "but rather difficult to transact business with." He continued, however, his devotion to the saint, and his bounty to the existing clergy, and thereby secured for himself a fairer character in the pages of the monkish historians than his crimes deserve. Clovis's reputation as a conqueror was, in his latter years, somewhat tarnished by a defeat received before Arles, from Theodoric the Great, King of the Ostrogoths, but it did not

A.D. 507.

greatly affect his power. His religion, however, consisted chiefly in superstitious observances, and his veneration for St Martin never prevented him from seizing every opportunity of extending his dominions, either by fraud or violence. The princes of the Merovingian race, whose interests seemed likely to interfere with those of his own family, he cut off without mercy. Of others he shaved the long hair, the distinguishing mark of royal blood, and shut them up in cloisters. If he suspected them to be capable of reflecting that their hair would grow again, he took sterner and more effectual means of shutting the paths of ambition against them.

Yet, though stained with the blood of his own relatives as well as others, Clovis, with many crimes as an individual, had great virtues as a monarch. He not only extended the power of his tribe over what we must in future call France, combining into one strong monarchy the shattered and broken fragments of so many barbarous tribes, as well as the feeble remains of the Roman settlers in Gaul: but was one of the first of the barbarous conquerors of the Roman empire, who tried to restore order and a certain degree of civilization in the dominions he acquired. His code of laws (called the Salic and Ripuarian, from having their origin on the banks of the Saal, and the eastern side of the Rhine) was equitable and humane on the whole; at the same time it bore the stamp of the warlike freedom which distinguished the ancient Franks. The King of the Franks gave to

his friends and followers the personal and temporary possession of benefices, fiefs, or farms, varying in extent and value, stipulating the service of the vassal, in peace or war, in return for abandoning to him the profits of the soil. Originally, these grants terminated at the will of the holder of the soil, at least at the death of the tenant; but at last it became usual to renew them, as a matter of course, on the death of the vassal, and in favour of his eldest son, or nearest heir, who paid, or rendered, a certain acknowledgment for receiving this preference.

The female inheritance of land was strictly prohibited by the Salic law, and the application of this law to the regal succession many centuries afterwards, thereby excluding the Kings of England from the throne of France, led to those long and bloody wars which perpetuate the remembrance of the original edict.

In many respects, the Frank institutions were those of barbarians. Slaughter was only punished by a fine, which differed according to the arbitrary value at which the law rated the persons slain. Ordeals of various kinds were established, in which the Deity was expected to work a miracle, in order to make manifest the guilt or innocence of an accused person, by protecting him from being burnt when walking barefoot among masses of hot iron; and similar unreasonable appeals were admitted, for obtaining a special testimony of innocence, at the expense of a suspension of the laws of nature. Another mode of trial was the referring the issue

of a lawsuit, or dispute of any kind, to the encounter of two champions, espousing the different sides of the contest in the lists. This was so well suited to the genius and disposition, as well as the manners of the martial barbarians, that it was soon generally introduced throughout Europe. Thus arose in France the first germ of those institutions called the feudal system, the trial by combat, and other peculiarities, which distinguished the jurisprudence of the Middle Ages.

We can also trace, in the customs and laws of the Franks, the same rude marks of the trial by jury, which seem originally to have been formed among all the northern people,—though it is very worthy of your notice, that the British alone have been able to mould it into such a form as to adapt it to a civilized state. The jurymen were, in the days of the origin of law, called compurgators. They were little more than witnesses brought forward to give evidence in behalf of the character of an accused person. "You have heard things alleged against me," said the accused, "but I will produce a certain number of compurgators, men who are well acquainted with me, and who will pledge their oath that I am incapable of what has been imputed to me." By steps which it is somewhat curious to trace, the compurgators, limited to a convenient number, came to be the judges in the cause, listening to the proof adduced, whether in favour of the guilt or innocence of the accused, and deciding by their verdict which of the two predominated.

The high and excessive preponderance which the Franks attached to their own warlike habits, induced them to claim such superiority over the Gallic or Roman colonists, that it must have reduced the whole, as it doubtless did a very great part of them, into the condition of bondsmen and Helots to their haughty conquerors, had not the more refined, but less gallant, provincialists found a retreat in the church, by which they were raised in general opinion above the condition of their conquerors, and, in their character as priests, dealt forth to them, as they pretended, the good and evil things of the next world, in consideration of being admitted to a large share of temporal wealth and power as a recompense in the present. As the clergy were men of information, and possessed what learning still existed in Europe, their lot was gradually rendered better than at first was threatened, and the rude warriors were frequently, even to their own surprise, obliged to submit to the well-informed and willy priest. But when the oppressed provincial of Roman or Gallic descent remained in a lay condition, he was considered as incalculably meaner and more worthless than the descendant of the Frank, or freeman, by whom he had been conquered, and the distinction betwixt him and the warlike barbarian remained long, and may be traced deep in the history and manners of the kingdom of France.

Clovis having laid the foundations of a mighty state, which he extended by victory, and guarded by laws, died at Paris, which he had selected for

the capital of his dominions, in the year of God 511. The monarchy which he founded was not in all appearance likely to survive him; for upon his death, it was divided among his four sons; but it was the singular fortune of this monarchy to be often put in danger of dismemberment by a division of territory, from which it repeatedly escaped, by the subsequent reunion of the detached portions upon the first opportunity. This spirit of individuality it perhaps received from the impulse of the institutions of Clovis, since those people who live under the same laws are predisposed to unite in the same government. A.D. 511.

But it is at least unnecessary to trace with accuracy the minute actions, separations and reunions of territory, during the sway of the kings of the First, or Merovingian race. They were never remarkable for family concord, and while their empire was divided into departments, they seem to have fallen into absolute anarchy. Their wars against their neighbours and each other were conducted with the utmost cruelty, and their social regulations seem to have been broken through by the general propensity to insubordination. One of Clovis's grandsons, Theodebert, King of Metz, passed the Alps into Italy; and although that irruption, like all which the French have hitherto directed against their transalpine neighbours, did not lead to a permanent conquest, yet he might have revived it with greater advantage at the head of a more numerous army, had he not been slain at a hunting-match by a wild bull, no unfit opponent to a headlong conqueror.

Theodebert left a son, but Clotaire, his uncle, had the address to seduce the allegiance of the people from the young heir of Metz, and prevail on them to acknowledge his own better right, as nearer to the blood of the great Clovis; and in the end this prince succeeded, by one means or other, in uniting once more under his own sway all the dominions of that great conqueror and legislator. After the death of Clotaire, the Frank empire was again subdivided, and then again followed a succession of wars, murders, and treacheries, which might be the stain of any kingdom, if the like could be found elsewhere.

About this time, the punishment of the kings of the Merovingian race began to descend upon them in a manner which was the natural fruit of their offences. These princes had habitually neglected their kingly duties, to plunge themselves into sensual pleasures, and had used their regal power for the gratification of their own selfish wishes and desires, instead of applying it to the administration of justice among their subjects, or the maintenance of the laws. By a natural consequence, their powers of understanding became limited to the petty subjects in which alone their unworthy passions induced them to take interest, while the real exercise of authority, whether in time of peace or war, devolved upon a minister known by the name of Mayor of the Palace, or, as we would say, the high-steward of the royal household, who had the complete administration in his own hand, to the total exclusion of the monarch. The kings, retiring

into the interior of their palace, led a life so useless and so totally without object, that they attained the name of Rois Fainéans, or Idiot Princes, while their Mayors of the Palace assumed the command of the armies, administered justice, made war and peace, and exercised every other sovereign right, without even consulting the wish or inclination of the long-haired puppet who held the name of king.

There are few countries which have not at some time or other been cursed by imbecile princes, who have let their power slip from their hands, and abandoned themselves to the pleasures of luxurious indolence, while their ministers discharged the duties of government. But at no time in Europe has the surrender been so complete, so absolute, and so lasting, as during the sway of the Merovingian princes.

Pepin the Elder, or d'Heristal (so called from chiefly residing in a castle of that name, upon the Meuse), was one of the most distinguished of those ministers, whose increasing, and finally exclusive power prepared the way for the final extinction of the race of Merovæus. Yet he still maintained a show of respect towards his supposed master. The nominal monarch was treated with such state as fully satisfied the popular regard, which still venerated the blood of Clovis. This sort of parade was but of a coarse clumsy character, suitable to the rudeness of the age. The King, when exhibited to the people, was driven about the streets, like a show of modern days, in a large waggon drawn by oxen, and surrounded by guards, who, under pre-

tence of protecting his person, suffered no one to approach him; on public occasions he kept aloof from his people, and was environed by the great officers of state. Thus, though an essential part of the ceremony, the King took as little interest in it as one of his own draught oxen. Every thing approaching to real business was settled by Pepin, who first rendered the office of mayor of the palace hereditary in his own family. He was also hereditary Duke of Austrasia in his own right, a rank to which he attached more importance than to his ministerial office, which for a considerable time before his death he exercised by deputy.

Pepin d'Heristal died in 714, after holding the reins of government for twenty-seven years. He had two sons by his wife Plectrude, the first of whom, Drogo, Duke of Burgundy and Champagne, died before his father; the second, Grimoald, who acted as mayor of the palace for his father, was assassinated in the church at Liège, on his way to visit his dying parent; a third son, Charles Martel, he had by a lady named Alpaïde, who was either his concubine or left-handed wife. As the latter was imprisoned just before Pepin's death, the facts of his exclusion from all part in his inheritance, and of Pepin's transmitting his office to Grimoald's son, Theobald, a child of only six years old, under the guardianship of his grandmother, Plectrude, would warrant the suspicion that Pepin believed, or was led to believe, that Charles was not altogether guiltless of his brother's blood. Plectrude retained him in prison for some time af-

terwards, and he was only released, when, in consequence of war having broke out between the Neustrians and Austrasians, and the latter having sustained some reverses, the want of his services began to be felt. Within three years afterwards, his victories and his ability had raised him to an equal, or greater pitch of power, than that of his father. Most fortunate the kingdom was in possessing his abilities at that time, for an awful crisis was approaching, pregnant with more imminent danger to the French empire than any that had menaced it since the great inroad of Attila.

As in the days of that Scythian monarch, the rising kingdom was threatened with the invasion, to use the language of Scripture, of "a nation from far, whose tongue they did not understand," and who, in all the pride of victory, came with the Moslem form of faith in one hand, and the sword in the other, to propound to the Christians of France the choice of apostasy or death. These were the Saracens, or descendants of the Arabian believers in Mahomet, who, having accepted the law of that impostor, had burst forth from their deserts, their natural ferocity and courage enhanced by their fanaticism, to lay waste the world, and preach the Koran. From the extremity of Africa, they had crossed into Spain, and destroyed, after a brief struggle, the kingdom which the Goths had erected there, and which they found under the government of a profligate and unpopular monarch. And now their arms were turned against France. Aquitaine, an independ- A.D. 713.

ent dukedom, a remnant of what had been the empire of the Visigoths in that province, was first exposed to their inroads. It was governed by a prince named Eudes, or Odo, who had hitherto been opposed to Charles Martel and his family, but now implored his assistance against the common enemy of Christianity, which was readily promised.

At the head of an army raised in his Austrasian possessions on the east side of the Rhine, Charles Martel, after communicating his plans to Eudes, advanced to meet his formidable antagonists. Permitting, and almost encouraging, the numerous bands of the invaders to enfeeble their force by dispersing themselves through the country in search of plunder, he kept his own army strongly concentrated. The Saracens and Christians at length encountered near the city of Tours, and the contest was continued for several days with an obstinacy worthy of the great interests at stake.

A.D. 732. While the battle continued desultory, which was the case during the first days of the strife, the Saracens, from the numbers and activity of their light squadrons, obtained some advantage over the Christians. But this was lost when the light-armed Arabs came to mingle in close combat with the warriors of the north, who were so much stronger in their persons, mounted on more powerful horses, and, above all, accustomed to seek out and to sustain the dangers of close encounter. Thus the battalions of the Saracens were already hard pressed, and beginning to give ground, when the cry of conflict was heard in their

rear, and the infidels discovered that their camp was assaulted by Eudes, at the head of the people of Aquitaine, who had concerted with Charles Martel the time and manner of so seasonable an attack. The Saracens then gave way, and were defeated with immense slaughter; although we may hesitate to believe that so many as three hundred and seventy-five thousand infidels fell, while only fifteen hundred Christians were slain in the battle. They retired, however, in good order, and committed great ravages in their retreat. Five years after, they again advanced into Provence, and got possession of several strongholds in that province. Charles Martel continued the war against them with various success for two years, at the end of which he had nearly dispossessed them of the footing they had obtained. The rest of his life was occupied in various expeditions against the Saxons, Frisians, and other tribes. Charles, planning yet more important achievements than he had executed, was removed by death. It appears that notwithstanding his great services to Christianity, he had incurred the odium of the clergy to such an extent, that more than a century after his death, his memory was stigmatized by the Council of Kiersi in 858, for having separated and divided the property of the church; and on that occasion, a story was promulgated, that his tomb being opened by accident, an ugly dragon started forth, and the inside of it was quite black, as if the contents had been burnt, which, it was boldly affirmed, was a sure

A.D. 741.

mark of his eternal damnation. The truth is, that living in camps, and mixing entirely with his soldiers, Charles did not scruple occasionally to reward their services by the gift or patronage of the ecclesiastical benefices which became vacant.

Charles Martel was succeeded in his titles and possessions by his three sons, Carloman, Pepin, and Grifo. Carloman, after six years of incessant warfare, retired from the world into a convent, abandoning his authority and dominions to Pepin; and Grifo, after various attempts against Pepin, which had been repeatedly forgiven, was at last murdered by his brother's emissaries in 753.

About this period, Pepin, now sole master, who had been hitherto content to govern in the name of Childeric III., the last of the Merovingian kings, began to tire of the obstacle interposed betwixt him and the name of king, while he already possessed the power. The important question, whether the Fainéant, or Simpleton, should continue to possess the royal title, rather than the active and effective minister who discharged the kingly duties, was submitted to Pope Zacharias, then Bishop of Rome. This pontiff had already received the most important services from Pepin, who had protected him against the arms of the Lombards, a nation of barbarians who had usurped the command of Italy, and was therefore warmly disposed to favour his views. At the same time, by assuming the office of arbitrator in a matter of such consequence, Zacharias established a precedent for the lofty claims which

A.D. 750.

the Popes of Rome had already put forward to become the general umpires of the Christian world. He in consequence declared, that it was but just and proper that he who exercised the functions of royalty should have the name and authority of king. Acting on the award or sentence of the pontiff, and availing himself of the power which was entirely in his hands, Pepin held an assembly of the Frank nobles, by which Childeric III., the last of the Merovingian race, was deposed, and Pepin himself elected king of France (1st March, 752). Childeric was obliged to take religious vows, and to retire into a monastery, where he died in 755. Thus ended the first, or Merovingian race of the kings of France, in consequence of their total indolence and incapacity. You will hereafter see, that the family of Pepin itself did not profit by the severe lesson imparted by its founder to its precursor, and had in its turn a similar term of decay and degradation.

Pepin, called by his historians *Bref*, or the Short, to distinguish him from his ancestor Pepin d'Heristal, became the founder of the Carlovingian, or Second race of French kings. At this period, the fragments of the former Roman empire had been repeatedly conquered and divided by barbarians of different origin, but yet, like the animal called a polypus, the severed parts showed a strong disposition to reunite and to frame new combinations of government. Pepin, whose reign lasted till 768, and his son Charles, who obtained the name of Charlemagne, or Charles the Great, made great

progress in erecting and consolidating the fabric of a new Western empire, equalling in extent, but differing widely from the former in laws and institutions, the more recent of which were in a great measure founded on those of the Franks, which we have since called the Feudal System.

To give their power the venerable sanction of religion, and the better to confirm their sway, both Pepin and Charlemagne engaged in repeated invasions of Italy, for the purpose of supporting the Bishops of Rome against the encroachments of the Lombards, a people already mentioned. This nation was finally conquered and annihilated by Charlemagne. He was then not unmindful that the Popes had been the first to sanctify his father's assumption of the crown, and began to study a recompense which should at once attest his gratitude and his devotion. For this purpose, Charlemagne conferred on the Bishops of Rome, who had hitherto been spiritual prelates only, a right of temporal dominion over their city and territories adjacent, which raised them to the rank of princes of this world, and he also enriched the holy see by various liberal donations. Subsequent Popes were discontented that their power should be supposed to rest on the narrow basis of Charlemagne's grant, and asserted that they possessed a right of the same tenor from Constantine the Great, not only more ancient, but more ample. But this pretended document is generally supposed to have been a forgery.

In return for so many favours, Pope Leo IX.

solemnly raised his benefactor, Charles, to the rank of Emperor of the Romans (800). The realms which were united under the sway of this victorious prince might well be termed a renewal of the Roman empire. As King of the Franks, he succeeded to their dominions both in France and Germany; for when, under the long-haired kings, that people advanced their conquests in France, they still retained their original German possessions on the east of the Rhine, which had been the land of their fathers, when they first formed their association, or league of freemen. But Charlemagne greatly enlarged these German possessions by overrunning Saxony. That province was inhabited by a fierce people, still heathens; and it cost a war of thirty years, and upwards, ere they were conquered and converted. In Germany, Charlemagne also defeated the remains of the great nations of the Huns, or Tartars, and added to his dominions the provinces of Bohemia and Pannonia, so as to reach the frontiers of the Eastern, or Grecian Empire. In Spain, he gained considerable advantages over the Saracens, and extended his power from the line of the Pyrenees, the natural boundary between France and Spain, to the banks of the Ebro, which river bounded his empire on that side. It was especially in his battles with the Saracens, that the romancers, who made the adventures of this great prince the subject of their poems, found materials for the numerous fables with which they altogether disguised and obscured his real exploits. The battle of Roncesvalles, in

which Charlemagne, though the chief of Christian and European chivalry, suffered a terrible defeat, and lost a great part of his Paladins, a select band of renowned champions so called, is supposed to have taken place in a pass of the Pyrenees, descending from these mountains. The rear-guard of the Franks was attacked by the natives of Gascony, whom the Moors had bribed to assist on the occacasion, and very many slain. The celebrated Orlando, or Roland, of whom romance says so much, and history so little, is reported to have fallen on this occasion.

But although the incidents of the reign of Charlemagne have been made the theme of many fables or exaggerations, there can be no doubt that this monarch, by his courage, constant activity, and frequent successes, fully deserved the title of *Great*. It has been well said of him, that his victories changed the face of Europe, and gave to his nation a preponderance which it had neither acquired during the three centuries that preceded, nor recovered during the ten centuries that have elapsed since his reign, until the period of our own times.

It would be difficult to estimate the consequences to the world at large, if Charlemagne could have transmitted his great and powerful empire to a single successor, as capable as himself of wielding the government. But the French diadem, it would seem, had something benumbing in its effect upon the wearer; and the desire among the descendants of Charlemagne to divide the succession, each seizing upon independent portions of the em-

pire, prevented this great experiment from being made. The German Empire, so much more feeble than that of the French, has subsisted, as a rickety and unhealthy child sometimes survives its more robust brother. Habit, in the one case, kept together a people accustomed to one language and the same system of laws. The Carlovingian Empire, on the other hand, fell to pieces for want of those principles of cohesion.

Charlemagne, indeed, transmitted great part of his dominions to his only surviving son Louis, previously created King of Aquitaine, and associated with his father in the empire. But in the course of two or three generations, the various descendants of the great Emperor Charles made war among themselves, and by treaties divided and subdivided his empire into fragments. It had, indeed required all the sagacity and activity of its founder, to keep together a large empire, consisting of unconnected kingdoms, inhabited in most cases by distinct races of people, Huns, Alani, Allemanni, Lombards, and other tribes, who had in their turn laid waste the European world. Charlemagne endeavoured to give strength and unity to this mass, by assigning to vassals of warlike skill, and of distinction at his court, the government of different provinces, they always holding their authority from and under himself as superior of the whole; so long as a man of such wisdom and power was at the head of the empire, these governors were compelled to do their duty, and as but few of them had yet obtained hereditary rights to

their offices, they were liable to lose them upon incurring the emperor's displeasure. In the assemblies of the crown vassals, Charlemagne, aided by the advice of his clergy and nobles, passed those laws which were called Capitulars, and which regulated his empire. In these general councils of the nation, there reigned among the hardy vassals who composed them, a strong spirit of freedom, mingled with a deference to the will of their emperor, to which the wisdom and high talents of this great monarch, the extent of his power, and the number of his conquests gave him a well merited right. He had also a mode of giving advice to those around him on such occasions, in which mirth was joined with sober counsel, and a serious lesson given under the appearance of a jest. For example, although Charlemagne himself displayed upon public occasions a considerable degree of rude magnificence, yet it was merely for the support of his imperial dignity in the public eye, and not from any pleasure which he received from the gratification of personal vanity. He dreaded, therefore, the introduction of luxury among his subjects. On one occasion, observing that his nobility and vassals had indulged to extravagance in silk dresses, lined with fur, he invited them, thus arrayed, to a royal hunting party, though the weather was the depth of winter, and the day rainy. He then, after they had been completely drenched in the forest, led them back to the royal hall, where the heat of the fire shrivelled up the wet furs. Charles on this gloried in his own plain sheepskin cloak, which

had neither suffered by the storm nor by the heat, and exhorted the tattered crew by whom he was surrounded, to reserve silk and furs for days of ceremony, and to use in war and in the chase the plain but serviceable dress of their ancestors.

In this anecdote there is more meaning than at first meets the eye. In the decay of the Roman empire, the successive defeats sustained by the various warlike tribes, which, seizing on the provinces of that immense ruin, had become in their turn a prey to luxury and effeminacy, and sunk under the sway of barbarians who retained their wild courage and simple manners, there was a strong lesson to future conquerors. From this, Charlemagne was naturally led to foresee the degeneracy which might sap the foundations of the throne, and bring down upon his own race a fate similar to that of the Merovingian dynasty, which his father, Pepin *Bref*, had extinguished. Neither were his apprehensions unfounded, as will appear in the sequel.

After a reign of nearly half a century in duration, Charles was succeeded in his throne by his son, Louis, called the Debonnaire, from his obliging and gentle character. That character was, however, greatly too gentle for the times in which he lived; and the instructions with which his father had carefully imbued him proved inadequate to form his courteous and yielding temper to encounter the difficulties of his situation. His sense of religion took an unhappy direction, and subjected him to undue influence on the part

A.D. 814.

of the prelates and clergy, who abused his weakness, and usurped the royal privileges. The near relations of the new emperor conspired against his crown and life, and he felt a degree of remorse at the necessity of punishing them, which increased the indirect authority of the priesthood, and induced him to submit to the most degrading penances. The Empress Judith, of the house of Guelf, obtained also a power over her husband's mind, which she used to pernicious purposes, persuading him to raise Charles, a son whom she bore to him, to a right of succession in the empire, and estates dependent thereon. This incensed the sons whom Louis the Debonnaire had by his former marriage, Lothaire, Pepin, and Louis, who engaged in an ungrateful and unnatural rebellion against the good-natured king. He even became prisoner

A.D. 835. to his insurgent sons, was solemnly degraded from his imperial dignity, and although afterwards recalled to the throne, the rest of his reign was only marked by a succession of fresh family intrigues, in the midst of which, embarrassed by the solicitations of his young wife, and the pretensions of his adult sons, he died broken-

A.D. 840. hearted. He left no part of his dominions to his son Louis, whose conduct he considered as especially undutiful. "Yet you must forgive him as a Christian," was the suggestion of the Bishop of Mentz. "I forgive him with all my heart," said the dying emperor; "but let him beseech God's forgiveness for bringing my grey hairs with sorrow to the grave."

Immediately upon the death of Louis, a general war ensued among his children; and in a dreadful battle which took place near Fontenay, upwards of one hundred thousand men of the Frank nation fell in defence of the pretensions of the various claimants. It was not till five years afterwards that this fraternal discord was terminated by a treaty, by which the dominions of Charlemagne were divided into three parts, and shared among the three brothers. The eldest, Lothaire, kept the title of Emperor; he also retained all Italy, with the city of Rome, and the whole tract of country lying betwixt the rivers Rhine, Rhone, Saone, Meuse, and Scheldt, which was from him called Lotharingia, the memory of which word survives in the word Lorraine, still applied to a part of what were Lothaire's dominions. Louis the Second, his brother, enjoyed all the dominions of Germany beyond the Rhine, and was thence called Louis the German. Charles, whose pretensions had, during his father's lifetime, given so much occasion for disturbance, was declared King of the third portion into which the empire of Charlemagne was divided. This comprehended Aquitaine, and all the provinces lying between the Loire and the Meuse. Thus the empire of Charlemagne was once more partitioned among his descendants, and their civil quarrels ended for a season. But their unnatural and bloody warfare had reduced them to such a state of weakness, as encouraged enemies to rise against them on all sides.

The Saracens, no longer restrained by such ge-

nerals as Pepin, Charles Martel, or Charlemagne, again attempted to extend their incursions into Gaul by land, into Italy by sea, and afforded no rest to the afflicted provinces of Charlemagne's empire. A still more formidable people had taken up arms for the purpose of harassing the coasts of Europe, and at their pleasure filling their vessels with spoil, or landing and acquiring settlements by force. These new and powerful conquerors were the inhabitants of Norway, Sweden, and Denmark, called by the ancients Scandinavia. The fleets equipped by these people were extremely numerous, and commanded by such chiefs as, either from hereditary descent or election, had aspired to authority. Undaunted courage was necessary in the commander of a people, who scarcely knew even the name of fear, and made it their boast that they signalized their courage at the expense of all other people on earth. As they were very expert sailors, they equipped numberless fleets, which ravaged all the coasts of Britain, France, and Spain, and sometimes even entered the Mediterranean. Though of various nations, yet being all of northern extraction, these pirates were known to the inhabitants of the south under the name of Northmen or Normans, by which they became so formidable, that public prayers were every where put up to Heaven for delivery from their visitations. The people were too much terrified to attempt any effectual resistance, and endeavoured to pacify these sea-robbers by humble submission; their kings attempted to bribe them by money to carry their

arms elsewhere. But though one squadron might be thus induced to relinquish its purpose for a season, the next summer was sure to bring fresh swarms of spoilers; in fact the Norman invasions of the coasts of southern Europe constitute the most remarkable feature in the history of the ninth and tenth centuries; but of this more anon.

While the coasts of France were thus exposed to the ravages of these ruthless invaders, the interior was a prey to the many evils arising from the weakness, incapacity, and dissensions of her rulers. The epithets bestowed by history on the successors of Charlemagne, all taken from personal or mental imperfections, sufficiently attest the contempt entertained for them; such nicknames as the Bald, the Simple, the Stammerer, and the Fat, would never have been bestowed on men who possessed the slightest claims on the grateful remembrance of their subjects. In the year 885, the kingdom of France, from the causes we have just mentioned, was reduced to such a state of anarchy and distress, that a crisis seemed to approach which threatened its national existence. A.D. 885.

At this period Charles, called the Fat, had, after the death of most of the direct descendants of Charlemagne, obtained the title of Emperor, with which he united for a time that of King of France. This prince had been formerly induced to consent to the settlement of a body of Normans in his province of Friesland, in the hope that their presence and co-operation would protect the coast of the Netherlands against visitations from their country

men. Finding that the Normans continued their incursions, and that Godfrey, the king of the settlers, intrigued against him with Hugo, a bastard nephew of his own, he resolved by a daring crime to redeem the consequences of a political error. Henry, Duke of Saxony, one of the Emperor's high officers, by the orders of his master, prevailed upon Godfrey to hold a friendly interview with him. To this interview Duke Henry brought one Count Berard, whom Godfrey had driven from his estate. The consequence was easily to be foreseen. Berard upbraided the Norman prince with his wrongs, and in the altercation killed him with his battle-axe. The Normans who attended their leader shared his fate. The Emperor having, in like manner, treasonably obtained possession of his nephew Hugo's person, caused his eyes to be put out, to render him incapable of reigning, and shut him up in the great convent of St Gall in Switzerland.

The death of Godfrey was followed by the most alarming consequences. The furious Normans, justly incensed at the treacherous murder of their leader, assembled a fleet of seven hundred sail, small vessels certainly (since they came up the Seine, which is inaccessible to large barks), but having on board a great army of their countrymen. Their object was to attack the city of Paris, the capital of France since the time of Clovis. When assaulted by the Normans, the city occupied only what is still called the Isle of Paris, which was surrounded by the Seine on both sides, and acces-

sible by two bridges, the approaches to which were strongly fortified with towers. In those times it held a high rank as a strong fortification, and was accounted one of the ramparts of Christendom. To protect and defend these walls and towers, the city was filled with the best of the French warriors, who devoted themselves to its defence. The Normans, who had expected to carry the place by surprise, were in that respect disappointed. But although their habits did not render them peculiarly fit for undertaking regular sieges, they disembarked their numerous bands, and pressed the city both with a blockade, and also by repeated assaults at the sword-point. Much courage was shown both in the attack and defence, and all the weapons of war then known were called into exercise. The bridges were defended by Odo or Eudes, an officer of courage and talent. Hugo the Abbot, so called from his possessing, though a layman and a military leader, the revenues of some abbeys, threw himself into the city of Paris, of which he was count, and with Goselin, bishop of the diocese, arranged its defence. Both distinguished themselves by their conduct, and both died in the course of the siege.

The Normans erected three movable towers, each capable of sheltering sixty men, and mounted upon wheels, by which they attacked the defences of the bridges. But these towers were dashed to pieces by the stones hurled on them, or consumed by combustibles discharged from engines for that purpose. Battering rams were also used by the

Northmen, with the like indifferent success, being broken by the weight of stones hurled from the machines of the besieged. The historians of Paris still commemorate the courage of twelve warriors who defended to the last the tower of the Little Chatelet. Being separated from the rest of the fortification by a breach made by the river, they could receive no assistance. When they perceived the desperation of their situation, they gave liberty to the hawks which each had along with him, and died in continuing an unavailing defence, with a resolution which would have surprised any people but the Normans, to whom such deeds of desperate valour were familiar.

But though the defence of Paris was obstinate, the loss of men and scarcity of provisions began to be distressing. Sigefroy, the King of the Normans, having under him thirty thousand men of that warlike nation, did not confine himself to the operations of the siege, but spread his forces through France, laying waste the country, and collecting supplies for his army. His cavalry and chariots of war (which are then for the last time mentioned in history) performed this duty so completely, that the Parisians despatched Eudes, who had succeeded Hugo the Abbot in the command of the place, to the Emperor Charles the Fat, with an account of their situation, and supplications for relief.

Charles sent Henry, Duke of Saxony, the perfidious agent in the murder of Godfrey, to try if his courage could extinguish the flame which his

treachery had kindled. But as the Duke led but few troops, he could only throw himself into the city with provisions and reinforcements. Shortly afterwards, in an attempt to reconnoitre the lines of the besiegers, this leader fell, horse and man, into a ditch covered with loose straw, laid upon slight hurdles, out of which he could not extricate himself, but was slain, and spoiled of his armour.

Paris was now more exposed than ever, for the troops of Henry of Saxony disbanded after his death. Eudes was now, as we have said, Count of Paris, and did what man could to animate the spirit of resistance. Another great danger was indeed approaching the Parisians. It was the heat of summer, and the river Seine became so low as to be fordable. Suddenly, at the hour of dinner, when the besieged kept but slender watch, the Normans rushed to the river side in one or two bodies, plunged in, and, gaining the opposite bank, began to ascend, by ladders, the low walls, with which, trusting to the usual depth of the water, its margin had been defended. A few gallant French champions rushed to arms, and made good the defence, till more came up, and drove back the besiegers, chiefly by the aid, according to the clergy, of the relics of St Genevieve, which were displayed upon the rampart.

The day after these extreme dangers, the banners of France appeared on the hill called Mont-Martre, which is hard by Paris, and the approach of the army of the Emperor diffusing the utmost

joy and hope among the citizens, obliged the Normans to retire within their own lines. Sigefroy was at bay, but a lion at bay; and Charles the Fat deserved his name too well to undertake such a risk as his ancestor, Charlemagne, would have willingly ventured upon. So soon as the Emperor was convinced that the Normans would abide the event of battle, or prosecute their siege of Paris, even in his very sight, if he lay still to await the event, he resolved to end the war by treaty, which he became unwilling to peril upon the event of a battle. By a base composition, he agreed to purchase the retreat of the Normans (whom his own treachery had been the cause of bringing to Paris) for a sum of seven hundred pounds of silver, and consented that the foreigners should take up their winter quarters in Burgundy. For this purpose, the Normans desired to ascend the Seine, and Charles would have been willing to permit them to pass under the armed walls of Paris, which they had so often assaulted in vain. But the Parisians, who were conscious that they owed their escape from plunder, conflagration, and massacre, more to their own vigilance and bravery, than to the tardy aid of the Emperor, refused to permit the Normans to approach so near their ramparts, that a breach of faith might have endangered their city. Sigefroy and his Normans, therefore, had no other means of removal to Burgundy, than to draw their light galleys over land, and again to launch them in the river Seine, at a certain distance above

Paris; and in this manner, loaded with spoil, they left the neighbourhood of the metropolis, whose dignity they had so long insulted.

As the Emperor had made a great effort throughout all his dominions, to collect the army which he headed on this occasion, and as very decisive and triumphant results had been anticipated, his subjects were equally mortified and incensed at the paltry and dishonourable treaty, by which he bought what he might have gained by the sword. Domestic quarrels with his wife, arising out of jealousy, increased the pain, mortification, and dishonour of his situation. His senses appear to have given way under these complicated distresses. He sunk into a kind of idiocy; and it was only by the charity of the Bishop of Mentz, that he was saved from being in want of the most ordinary necessaries of life. Arnulph, one of his illegitimate nephews, was chosen emperor in his place; and the terms in which Charles petitioned him for even a bare subsistence, seem to show that his mental disorder had lucid intervals, since he was able to draw so touching a picture of the uncertainty of human affairs.

"You," says the deposed Emperor, "are now elevated to the state from which I have lately fallen. I pray the All-Powerful to confirm you in your place, and to grant you the protection which He has withdrawn from me. You are on the throne, and I am on the dunghill which my misconduct has spread for myself. The advantages of mind are still at my command; and no king can

grant, or take these away. But, for the support necessary to life, I musk ask it from others; and from none so naturally as from you, one of the race of my fathers, and holding the place from which I have fallen. Among so numerous a household, among so many knights and gentlemen, who share your bounty daily, the simple necessaries of life bestowed on an old man will be no additional burden." The new Emperor was touched by the petition of his humbled predecessor, and settled upon him the rent of some villages for his maintenance. Charles the Fat did not long survive his humiliation, dying within a few weeks after he was deposed, at the castle of Indinga, in Suabia.

A.D. 888.

CHAPTER V.

Elevation of Eudes to the Throne of France—Disorders during the reign of Charles the Simple—Encroachments of the Nobility—The Feudal System—its Advantages and Disadvantages—Invasion of Rollo, who obtains the Duchy of Normandy, and the Daughter of Charles the Simple in Marriage—Death of Charles—Reign of Louis d' Outremer—Descent of Hugo the Great, ancestor of the Bourbons—Reign of Lothaire—War with Normandy, and with Germany—Dissatisfaction of the French on account of Lothaire's Treaty with Germany—Reign of Louis the Fainéant, the last of the Carlovingian Dynasty.

[889–987.]

We have seen that Arnulph, a prince of the blood of Charlemagne, was chosen emperor on the deposition of the unfortunate Charles the Fat. In that part of the deposed monarch's dominions, however, which retained the name of France, the inhabitants appear to have determined to seek for the virtues and talents of Charlemagne elsewhere than in his line, in which these fair qualities seem to have become extinct. Eudes, the valiant Count of Paris, whose gallant defence of that town had made him popular, and who was the son of Robert the Strong, Count of Paris, was elevated to the throne by the voice of the great feudatories, in preference to several other competitors. He did homage for the crown of France to Arnulph, who

was at that time only the emperor-elect, but who at once acknowledged his title; and he entered accordingly upon the government of France. But the talents and courage of Eudes, though allowed to be great, were found inadequate to the object of repelling the harassing and repeated incursions of the Normans, and the rebellions among his own subjects. Four years after his election (893), a powerful party, at the head of which were Fulk, Archbishop of Reims, and Heribert, Count of Vermandois, dissatisfied with his government, raised to the throne a competitor in the person of a prince of the Carlovingian race, namely Charles, the posthumous son of Louis the Stammerer, then only in his fourteenth year. This prince, however, was altogether deficient in the qualities necessary to sustain his elevation. The weakness of his character and understanding was such as attached to his name the epithet of *The Simple*, a distinction which his subsequent conduct seems to have well justified. A sort of civil war in consequence broke out, which lasted several years, but without much bloodshed on either side. Eudes, on more than one occasion, showed himself merciful, and even generous to his antagonist; and finally, in 897, a compromise was entered into, by which Eudes retained the throne and sceptre for his life, and Charles was recognised as his successor. Eudes did not survive this arrangement more than a year, and left no issue. Charles was crowned for the second time at Reims, in January 898. Under a prince so weak as he had already shown himself,

the disorders of the state, which had already risen to so great a pitch, became rooted and incurable. To understand this, you have only to recollect, that in the time of Charlemagne, who held his sceptre with a firm hand, governments, offices, and even landed estates, were only granted for life to such individuals as the Emperor chose to distinguish. At the death of the person who held the benefice, as the subject of the grant was called, it again reverted to the crown, and was conferred elsewhere But in the declining state of the French monarchy, the great men who were in possession of offices or lands were naturally desirous of perpetuating their authority in their offices, and their property in estates, to their families. Hence arose, at first, in a few instances, and at length from general custom, the formidable novelty, that the vassal had a hereditary interest in the fief, and that, far from falling, on the death of the original holder, it was transmitted to his eldest son as a matter of right, he being of course obliged to perform the same services to which his ancestor had subjected himself by accepting the benefice in the first instance. Thus the nobles of the first rank, who now took the title indifferently of Duke, Marquis, Count, or the like, were no longer the mere delegates of the sovereign who had conferred the gift upon their predecessors, but in all respects, except the title, formed an order of petty kings, distributing justice in their own right, coining money, making laws and ordinances, and, except the deference and allegiance which they owed to their superior, the monarch who ori-

ginally conferred the fief, acting as independent princes, each in his own province.

In the courts of these petty princes or great vassals of the crown, the same form of feudal grants took place. The Duke, Count, or Marquis, assigned offices connected with his own little court, and distributed lands to nobles of lower rank, on condition of obtaining their assistance in war and their counsels in peace, being the services which the great vassal himself rendered to the sovereign.

These tenures descended still lower. Thus, if the great vassal had his officers of the household, and his military officers, who gave him their service, and that of their followers in war, each of these inferior feudatories had his household modelled on the same footing, differing only as their vassals and dependants were fewer in number, and less liberally recompensed. The system descended even lower, so that the domestic establishments of many private gentlemen, however reduced the scale, resembled that of the sovereign himself; and though they had only the rank of vassals, while rendering attendance on the lord from whom they held their fiefs, each of these might, notwithstanding, fancy himself a prince, when seated in his own tower, and surrounded by his own dependents, bearing the pompous epithets of chief steward, chief butler, or grand huntsman, and distinguished as such by these duties at home and abroad.

When this system of feudal dependence, from the highest to the lowest rank of society, began to assume the form of fixed and assured law, it pro-

duced an influence upon government and manners, which was, in some respects, extremely advantageous, and in others very much the reverse. In the first point of view, it gave a high tone of independence and courage to the nation, thus divided into vassals and superiors, each, from the private gentleman to the sovereign upon the throne, rendering the same or similar service to his superior, which he received from his vassals, all jealous of their privileges as freemen, tenacious of their personal rights, and equally so of their military reputation. Each vassal paid to his superior that service and homage which his fief, in its peculiar nature, required; but that once discharged, his obligation was ended, and he was as free a man as his superior himself. This proud reflection seemed the more justly founded, that those vassals who had divided and subdivided among them the province of Gaul, were almost all descended from the Franks, Burgundians, and other tribes of the barbarous but free conquerors of the Roman state, equal, therefore, from the beginning, as natives of the same tribe of freemen, who acknowledged no distinction. You will recollect that these conquerors seized upon two-thirds of the land, and apportioned it among themselves, assuming the title of Leudes, signifying freemen. The Roman colonists, on the other hand, whom the barbarians had subdued, were permitted to cultivate the remaining third, which was left by the conquerors for their subsistence. It was by their hands that almost all the agriculture of the country was carried on, which

necessary, though irksome task, the Leudes left to the charge of the *serfs*, or bondsmen, for to that station were the unhappy Romans reduced, and by that disgraceful epithet were they known. Not only did their labours supply the country with corn, but such tribute as was levied in the province, was exclusively paid by this degraded class of the nation. The freeman hunted, fished, or went to war, at the call of his superior, or his own inclination; but he paid no tax, and put his hand to no labour. The pasturages were stocked with cattle, often the spoils of war, which were kept either by serfs or domestic slaves; for both kinds of servitude were known to the French, and the laws of war placed the captive at the pleasure of the conqueror, unless he was able to purchase his freedom by a ransom. It naturally followed, that the men who thus enjoyed independence, and escaped every species of toil except that of warfare, were a bold and high-spirited race, and that sensible of the value of their freedom, accustomed to connect their liberty with the feats of their ancestors, they were alive to every encroachment upon it, and always ready to vindicate what they held so dear, from the slightest attack of domestic oppression. Their nobles and gentry grew up a fine race, and were improved by such Normans as settled among them; and you will presently see that the numbers of these were very great. They were ready warriors, generous, and true to their word, and in so far the character of the French nation was highly improved by the introduction of the feudal system.

In other respects, the independence of the great crown vassals on the king, and that of the barons of the second order upon the crown vassals, an independence which descended to the lowest link of the feudal chain, formed but a feeble system of government, and gave an insecurity to the ties which bound together the national compact. The whole kingdom, instead of a country having one interest and one government, seemed at first sight divided among the great vassals of the crown, none of whom were disposed to admit the king to possess or exercise more power over them than the monarch was strictly entitled to by the rules of the feudal tenure. This spirit of resistance was the more awake, as these great feudatories considered the diminution of the king's influence as the ready mode of increasing their own, and many probably looked forward to the time when each grand vassal might altogether shake himself free from the feudal yoke, and possess his dukedom or county in his own right, as an independent prince.

Upon looking at the condition of the crown vassals more closely, it might be observed, that the same principle of disunion which induced them to encroach upon the rightful claims of the crown for obedience and support, was undermining their own, and that their vassals and dependents were frequently disposed to refuse that service to them which they hesitated to grant to the crown. It was the result of both circumstances, that the unanimous power of the nation could not be easily exerted, while it was divided and torn asunder by

so many subjects of dispute and hostility. To this disunion was also to be attributed the oppressive rights assumed by the feudal lords within their own territories, where the barons of inferior rank, without even the pretence of right or justice, oppressed and ruined the unhappy serfs, and robbed, spoiled, and murdered without any check, save their own haughty pleasure. It could not be said, as an excuse for these abuses, that there was no king in France, but it might have been well urged, that the crown, besides being placed on the head of the simple Charles, was divested in a great measure of that authority which prevents crimes, and the power which inflicts upon them condign punishment.

Amid these internal disorders of the French, the repeated invasions of the Northmen assumed an aspect so formidable, that it was plain they were not made with the mere purpose of spoil, but in order to establish a lasting conquest either of the whole kingdom, or of some of its principal provinces.

A.D. 911. In the year 911, a large army and fleet of this brave and lawless people appeared at the mouth of the Seine, formidable from their unwonted degree of discipline, and the respect and obedience which they paid to their prince. This was Hrolfe, or Rollo. By birth he was son of the King of Denmark, distinguished by his conduct in many expeditions both in Britain and France, and having in his personal character a respect for truth and fidelity to his engagements, which was not a usual characteristic of his countrymen. One

large body of his forces sailed up the river Loire, and destroyed the cathedral of St Martin of Tours, the same patron of whose rigid exactions Clovis formerly complained, and whose shrine had been enriched in proportion to his popularity. Another body, commanded by Rollo in person, ascended the Seine, took the city of Rouen, and treating the inhabitants with moderation, fixed their headquarters there, and deposited within its walls the spoil which they accumulated from all parts of the province of Neustria, of which Rouen was the capital.

Charles the Simple possessed neither the courage, nor the means to resist so formidable an antagonist. He demanded a truce with the Norman prince, in order to give time for a more solid peace, at the expiration of which, terms not being agreed upon, Rollo renewed hostilities, sent a part of his army into Burgundy, where it committed great devastations, and after its return laid siege to Chartres with his whole force. Two of the great crown vassals, Richard, Duke of Burgundy, and Robert, Count of Paris, and Duke of France, brother to the late King Eudes, united all the troops they could collect, and made an attack upon the Normans, in order to compel them to raise the siege. In this attack they were successful, and Rollo was obliged to retire. After the battle, the victors drew a circumvallation around a hill to which the Normans had retreated. But Rollo was not without his resource. He alarmed the French camp by a charge blown near to their bulwarks at

the dead of night, and while the besiegers were running about in terror and disorder, the Norman prince cut his way through them, and his army being greatly reinforced, soon found the means of making more merciless havoc than he had done before the truce.

Charles was now obliged to resume his negotiations with the Norman prince, with more good faith than formerly. Using the Archbishop of Rouen as an ambassador, he proposed to Rollo, that if he would consent to embrace the Christian religion, and assume the character of a loyal vassal, the King would confer upon him as a fief the fertile province of Neustria, and give him his daughter Gisèla in marriage. Rollo accepted of these favourable terms, with the sole additional stipulation, that as Neustria, the name of which he changed to Normandy, was exhausted by his previous ravages, a part of Bretagne, or Brittany, should be assigned to him in the interim, for the better support of his army. Rollo adopted the Christian faith with sufficient readiness, and at the font exchanged the heathen name of Rollo for that of Robert, the Duke of France, who stood godfather to him. But when the new Duke was to receive investiture of Normandy from Charles, his pride was startled at the form, which required him, in acknowledgment of the favour bestowed on him, to kneel to his liege lord, and kiss his foot. "My knee shall never bend to mortal," said the haughty Norman; "and I will be, on no account, persuaded to kiss the foot of any one whatever." The French counsellors present suggested that this difficulty might be sur-

mounted by Rollo, or Robert, appointing a deputy to kiss, in his name, the foot of Charles. Accordingly, the Duke commanded a common soldier to perform the ceremony in his stead. The man showed the small value he attached to the ceremony, by the careless and disrespectful manner in which he performed it. Instead of kneeling to salute the royal foot, he caught it up and performed the ceremony by lifting it to his mouth. In this awkward operation, the rude Norman wellnigh overturned the simple King, throne and all, and exposed him to the laughter of all around.

The essentials of the treaty were more satisfactorily settled. Rollo entered upon his new dominions, and governed them with the strictest justice, becoming, from a fierce and lawless pirate, a wise and beneficent prince. He was so severe in the execution of robbers, the multitude of whom was one of the great evils of his time, and so successful in extirpating them, that at length, by way of bravado, he caused golden bracelets to be suspended from an oak-tree in a forest, close to the Seine, which remained there three years without any one venturing to touch them. The Norman followers of Rollo were also converted to the Christian creed, and reclaimed from the errors of paganism. They abandoned the bloody ritual of their own ancient faith, without losing any part of the dauntless courage and contempt of death which it inspired. They also received readily such ideas of honour as the French began to entertain, which afterwards led to the system of chivalry; and under that process

we shall soon see the Normans distinguished for the eagerness with which they tempered their courage and contempt of danger with the high-minded metaphysics of Love and Honour. This is easily understood, if we consider that the hardest pebbles are most fit to receive the highest polish.

The state of Normandy, thus established in independence, saving the uncertain allegiance of its Duke, as a crown vassal to the sovereign of France, was destined, a century afterwards, to give a dynasty of kings to England, and has been rendered illustrious by producing as many men of courage and gallantry as have ever adorned any country of the world.

The year after this memorable treaty, Charles the Simple added to his other follies that of throwing himself entirely into the hands of an unworthy favourite named Haganon, a man of low birth, and inferior talents, whose insolence rendered him exceedingly obnoxious to the great nobles. On one occasion, when they had been attending the diet at Aix-la-Chapelle, and wished to confer with Charles, two of them, Robert, Duke of France, and Henry, Duke of Saxony, were kept waiting four days before Haganon would allow them to see the King. Tired out at last, the Duke of Saxony exclaimed, "Surely Haganon will either become king instead of Charles, or they will both be reduced to the station of private gentlemen."

The whole reign of Charles presents nothing but a series of rebellions and contests with the great feudatories, in all of which Charles never

showed himself to advantage, either as a man of action or a man of judgment. His kingdom was also disturbed, not only by the invasion of bands of Normans, whom the Duke of Normandy's success had drawn to the shores of France in shoals, but that of Hungarians, or Bulgarians, a people descended from the ancient Huns. These barbarians were guilty of great cruelties, leaving a terrible impression upon the minds of the French, which is said to survive in the nursery tales concerning the Ogres, the origin of which is to be found in the atrocities of the Bulgarians, or Huns, of the period we are now speaking of.

Nine years after this (namely in 922), Charles's government had become so odious and contemptible, that his great vassals took arms against him, and determined to depose him. Under the command of Robert, Duke of France, already mentioned, and his son Hugh, the army of the confederates, joined by Rodolph, Duke of Burgundy, advanced against Laon, Charles's capital, which opened its gates to them, and delivered up the King's treasures and those of his favourite. Deserted by almost every one, Charles fled to Lorraine. Regarding his flight as an abdication, the nobles agreed to make Duke Robert their king, and he was crowned, accordingly, at Reims in the end of June. Before a year had elapsed, however, Charles had succeeded in raising an army, with which he advanced into his former territories, with a view to recover his authority. Coming upon his rival unawares, and when he least expected him,

a battle took place between the contending armies near Soissons, at the commencement of which Charles had the advantage, and King Robert was slain, as some said, but erroneously, by his rival's hand. The advantage, however, was but momentary, for Duke Hugh, by his gallantry, soon retrieved the fortune of the day, revenged his father's death, and put the enemy to the rout; the inhabitants of Soissons came out and intercepted the fugitives in their flight, and either killed or dispersed the greater part of them.

The crown which had encircled the brows of his father, Robert, and his uncle, Eudes, would undoubtedly have been placed on the head of the victor, had he been so inclined. With rare self-denial, however, Duke Hugh declined the proffered diadem, and induced his confederates to bestow it upon Rodolph, Duke of Burgundy, his brother-in-law, who was accordingly crowned at Soissons by the Archbishop of Sens, in July, 923. Charles's hopes of being restored to the throne were soon after nipt in the bud. Tempted by the brilliant offers and solemn protestations of Heribert, Count of Vermandois, the simple monarch intrusted himself to that artful and powerful vassal, by whom he was immediately seized and shut up at Chateau Thierry, where he remained a captive until near the end of his days. He died in 929.

After his election to the throne of France, Rodolph retired to his duchy of Burgundy, satisfied with having added a higher title to his hereditary one, and during the thirteen years of his nominal

reign, troubled himself very little with the general administration, leaving it entirely in the hands of his brother-in-law, Duke Hugh, controlled only by the Count of Vermandois, who contrived to make his guardianship of the captive monarch a means of serving his own personal aggrandisement. The kingdom continued to be harassed by predatory incursions of the Normans, Saracens, and Hungarians, generally ending in the defeat and slaughter of the invaders.

At the death of Rodolph, in the beginning of 936, Duke Hugh gave a second proof of his self-denial or prudence, by declining once more the crown that was undoubtedly within his grasp, and placing it on the head of another. At this time Hugh was the most powerful nobleman in Roman France, and from the extent of his hereditary possessions and wealth had acquired the title of the Great. His dukedom of Neustria included the whole country between the Loire and the Seine, and that of France the country between the Seine and the Meuse. It has been conjectured, that his ambition was better satisfied with the power of a hereditary chieftain over his fiefs, than with the exercise of the prerogative of an elective king, over turbulent and independent vassals. He had considerably enlarged his family inheritance, and looked to extend it still farther, but he was anxious to clothe all his acquisitions with the sanction of royal authority, and considered that they were much more likely to be respected by the other vassals, or by subsequent monarchs, if he

could place between them and himself the name of a legitimate king, of one whose authority he could sway, than if he exposed himself to a double contest for the acquisition he had made, and the crown he had assumed. This, at least, affords a plausible key to his preceding as well as subsequent conduct.

Charles the Simple left a son, Louis by name, who, upon his father's captivity, had been removed to England by his mother, Odgiva, an English princess, daughter of Edward the Elder, and sister to Athelstan, King of the Anglo-Saxons. Soon after Rodolph's death, he received an invitation from the Duke of France, the Duke of Normandy, and the Count of Vermandois, and other nobles of the same party, to return and assume the crown of France. He was consecrated at Reims in June 936 as Louis IV., and is distinguished in the French annals by the title of D'Outremer, or from beyond sea. The character of Louis was in all respects superior to that of his father, for bravery, activity, and intelligence. His whole reign, however, was spent in quarrels and intrigues with and against the Dukes and Counts, who were subjects too mighty to endure the supremacy of the Crown, and whose power he could only control by the policy of stirring up one against the other. Louis's ineffectual efforts to restore the royal authority were cut short by his death, A.D. 954. occasioned by his horse falling while at full speed, in pursuit of a wolf.

Lothaire, Louis's eldest son, was only thirteen

years old at the time of his father's death. Although the Duke of France had been disappointed in the views he had entertained of making the late king an instrument for the increase of his power, he still adhered to the same system of prudent policy which he had adopted on two former occasions, and readily agreed to support the young monarch (who was his own nephew, the late king and himself having married two sisters of the Emperor Otho), on certain conditions assented to by the King's mother, the principal of which was, the investiture of the duchy of Aquitaine, to the exclusion of the Count of Poitiers, the actual possessor. Lothaire, after his coronation, accompanied his uncle in his expedition against Poitiers, which was only partially successful. Two years after this (956), Hugh the Great died, leaving behind him three sons. The eldest was Otho, who was invested with the duchy of Burgundy before his father's death; the second, Hugo, distinguished from his father by the surname of Capet (or Caput), was only ten years old at this time; and the third son, Eudes, or Henry, afterwards succeeded his brother Otho, as Duke of Burgundy, at the death of the latter in 965. For Hugo himself fate reserved a fairer diadem.

Lothaire embroiled himself in a quarrel with Duke Richard, of Normandy, the second successor of Rollo, or Robert I., in that almost independent principality; and, by advice of Theobald, Count of Chartres, called the Trickster, endeavoured to overreach him by inviting him to an interview.

Duke Richard complied with the invitation without hesitation, and set out on his journey to the place appointed. He was met by two knights of the Count of Chartres, who, pitying his unsuspicious loyalty, gave him indirect notice of the design against his person, by asking him, whether he was tired of his ducal coronet, and had a mind to become a shepherd. Duke Richard, taking the hint which this question conveyed, rewarded the knights who gave it, bestowing on the one a gold chain which he wore, and on the other his sword. He instantly returned to Rouen, and took up arms against the treacherous King, obtaining such succours from his original country of Denmark, as soon brought Lothaire to sue for peace, which was made accordingly.

Another war broke out between Lothaire and his cousin Otho, Emperor of Germany, which reflected little credit on the King of France. From some private pique, and in a time of profound peace, Lothaire suddenly marched his army upon Aix-la-Chapelle, and, disappointed in making the Emperor prisoner, committed considerable ravages on his territories. Otho, to revenge this insult, invaded France with sixty thousand men, and advanced to the gates of Paris, sending word to Hugo Capet, count of the city, that he would cause a mass to be sung on the summit of Mont Martre, by so many voices, that the Count should hear the sound in the isle of Paris. After fulfilling this bravado, Otho retired to his own dominions, and Lothaire's army, which

A.D. 978.

followed him, gained some slight advantages over the rear of his forces. Peace, however, was restored within two years afterwards. During the remainder of his reign, Lothaire's actions were such as history takes no account of. In 979 he associated his son Louis in the throne, A.D. 986. and in 986 he died at Rheims, not without the suspicion of poison.

Louis V., called the Fainéant, did nothing which could be termed inconsistent with his name. He quarrelled with his queen, and was about to engage in a new war with Germany. But before he had reigned fourteen months, he died under the same suspicion of poison which attached to his father's demise. A.D. 987. This prince was the last of the Carlovingian dynasty of kings, which had occupied the throne of France for upwards of two hundred and thirty years.

CHAPTER VI.

Causes which led to the Third Change of Dynasty—Accession and Reign of Hugo Capet, son of Hugh the Great—Reign of Robert the Wise—Dissensions between Robert's Sons—Accession of Henry I.—Pilgrimage of Robert Duke of Normandy to the Holy Land—his Son William (afterwards the Conqueror of England) left at the head of the Government of Normandy—War between Normandy and France—Defeat of the French at Mortemart—Pacification between the two Countries—Death of Henry I.

[987–1060.]

You must keep in memory, that since the institution of the government of France as a monarchy, two races of kings had existed, the Merovingian, and the Carlovingian. The causes of the third change of dynasty, which took place at the death of Louis the Fainéant, may be here shortly touched upon.

I. Under neither of the former dynasties was the right of hereditary succession so well defined and understood as it was subsequently. The brother often succeeded to a deceased monarch, instead of his son, without reverence to the degree of propinquity to the last king. After the deposition of the Merovingian line, the Bull of Pope Zacharias, which assigned the throne to the race of Pepin, enjoined the French in future, in choosing

their king, to select him exclusively from the race of the founder, to which the crown stood limited. This limitation, however, did not establish a strict hereditary line of succession, for, as understood in practice, it was sufficiently adhered to, provided the candidate for sovereignty was of the race of Pepin or Charlemagne; so that the kingdoms of the empire offered a tempting prize to all who boasted a descent from the founder's family, however distant from the direct line of succession. This absence of a regular and fixed rule of inheritance occasioned great disputes, which led to the repeated division and subdivision of the royal dominions, and not only weakened the body of the empire, but often terminated in bloody civil wars, by which it was still farther torn to pieces.

II. The empire of Charlemagne comprehended a huge mass of territory, extending from the Tiber to the Elbe, and from the Pyrenean mountains to the borders of Hungary, and embraced many nations, differing from each other in laws, language, and manners, which the triumphs and abilities of one individual had united under his government, but which had a natural propensity to fall asunder, so soon as the great mind which held them together was removed. Hence, it was not long before the kingdom of France was separated from that of Italy, and from the empire, latterly so called, of Germany.

III. The grants which were made to the great officers of state, and vassals of the crown, had their natural influence in impoverishing the monarchs of

France; so that, during the reign of the two or three last monarchs of the Carlovingian line, almost every considerable city in the kingdom was in possession of some duke, count, or baron, who collected revenue from it, excepting only Laon and Rheims, and some family estates, which the kings possessed on the same footing, and managed in the same manner, as they would have done, had they been private individuals.

The Carlovingian family being reduced to so low an ebb in point of power and wealth, it was not to be wondered at, if the nobility of France resolved to fill the throne with some more powerful prince. Charles, Duke of Lorraine, was, no doubt, the brother of Lothaire, and the next heir, therefore, to Louis the Fainéant, his deceased nephew. But he was far inferior in talents to Hugo Capet, who had long been esteemed the first man of the kingdom in point of rank, wealth, and actual power. He was Duke of France, Burgundy, and Aquitaine, Count of Paris and Orleans, in addition to various other titles and dignities, and could bring far more wealth to the crown of France, than he could acquire by succeeding to it. Hugo Capet availed himself so well of these advantages, that, A.D. 987. on the death of Louis the Fainéant, he assembled the states of the kingdom, consisting probably of the principal crown vassals, with the bishops and prelates, whom he was the first to introduce into these assemblies, and by their assent was chosen King of France.

With a view, probably, to establish the succession

of the crown in his own family, Hugo Capet, within six months after his own elevation to it, associated his son Robert with him in the throne, and obtained the assent of the States to that association. Charles of Lorraine, the Carlovingian heir to the crown, attempted, though tardily, to dispute the succession, but was surprised and made prisoner by the elected monarch; and being thrown into prison at Orleans, was detained there till his death. The son of Charles succeeded him in the Duchy of Lorraine, but died without male issue; and in his person, the legitimate succession of Charlemagne became extinct. A.D. 991.

The head of the new race of kings behaved with a wisdom and moderation which tended to secure the succession of his family; for though brave men may gain kingdoms, it is wise men only who can transmit them to their lineage. Hugo Capet flattered and gratified the clergy, whose influence was then daily on the increase, by resigning to them such abbeys as he possessed, and inducing many of his nobles to follow his example, for which he was highly lauded by the church.

Conscious of the weakness of his title, and of the difficulty of dealing with men, some of whom were nearly as powerful as himself, he demanded little more from the crown vassals than the homage, which, while he limited his claim to it, they had no interest to refuse, and while he encouraged them to weaken each other by intestine wars, he looked forward to the time, when the power of the crown should rise upon their ruins. As an instance of

the spirit of the nobles of that day, it is related that when Adalbert, Count of Perigueux, who was at war with William Count of Poitou, had taken from him the cities of Poitiers and Tours, he assumed the title of Count of Poitiers and Tours, in addition to that which he had previously borne; whereupon the King, having sent a herald to him to ask—who had made him Count? received by the herald the laconic retort,—who has made thee King? The monarch passed over an insult which he had not sufficient power to revenge.

By a rare mixture of prudence and firmness, Hugo Capet transmitted to his family a crown to which he had no hereditary right, with little opposition, and almost without bloodshed. After a reign of eight years, distinguished by no very remarkable events, he died, and was succeeded by his son Robert, under whose long reign the royal authority became every day weaker and weaker, while the power and influence of the great vassals, in consequence of the extension of the feudal system, increased in the same proportion. The character of Robert, which was marked by an easiness of temper and good nature almost bordering on simplicity, was exactly of the kind to invite and secure impunity to encroachments upon his rights and authority.

A.D. 996.

Following his father's example, and that of his Carlovingian predecessors, Robert I. caused his eldest son Hugh, and after his death without issue, his third son, Henry, to be crowned in the usual manner, at Rheims. By this plan, the chance of an

alteration in the succession was much diminished, since the lineal successor was thus acknowledged prior to the demise of his predecessor; but there was a danger also, as Robert found to his cost, that the sovereign-elect might seek to anticipate the period for taking the reins of government into his hands.

The peace of Robert's reign was somewhat disturbed by the annulling of his first marriage, and by the political intrigues of his second queen, to whose ambition and domineering temper he appears to have given more free course than consisted with the prudence of his character in other respects. He had also some trouble from the petulance and disobedience of his sons; but these were only passing disturbances, and soon appeased.

The reputation of Robert for good faith and justice stood so high, that the Emperor Henry II., having to settle some disputes with the Count of Flanders, and others of his vassals, which involved causes of quarrel with the vassals of the King of France, determined to have a meeting on the subject with Robert. Upon this business the two princes made arrangements for the interview on the banks of the Meuse. In these unhappy times, such meetings had, from treachery on the one part or the other, often ended in assassination. On this occasion it was proposed by their ministers, that the two princes should leave the opposite sides of the river, and meet at the same moment in the middle. But the generous Emperor, confident in the character of King Robert, set ceremony and suspicion at

defiance, and, crossing the Meuse without scruple, surprised the King of France with a visit in his camp. After thus dispensing with all etiquette, the business in dependence was settled to the satisfaction of all parties.

Two years after this interview, the good Emperor Henry died, and was succeeded in the empire by Conrad, Duke of Worms, called Conrad the Salic. The Italian subjects of the empire were dissatisfied with the small interest allowed them in the election; and anxious to have a monarch of their own, they applied, in consequence, first of all to the King of France, and made an offer to place the crown of Italy on his own head, or that of his eldest son Hugh. But Robert took so much time to consider the proposal, and Conrad was so active and expeditious in his movements, in traversing his dominions and securing the fidelity and receiving the homage of his vassals, that the chances of a successful contest with him became to the last degree doubtful. Robert therefore wisely rejected the proposal made to him.

King Robert's domestic government was of the same judicious and moderate character which distinguished his foreign politics. He used his royal power for the benefit of his subjects, and protected the lower and oppressed part of them, as much as the temper of the times permitted. His private charity was so extensive, that upwards of a thousand poor persons dined at his expense every day, and, in the excess of his humility, were, notwithstanding their disgusting rags and sores, permitted

to approach his royal person. It is pretended he used to exercise upon them the supposed gift, claimed afterwards both by the Kings of France and England, of curing the disease called the king's evil, by their touch and their prayers. King Robert I. died, universally regretted, in 1031. A.D. 1031.

Upon the death of that king, the house of Capet began to show some symptoms of the family dissensions which had been so conspicuous in those of Merovæus and of Charles the Great. The succession of Henry, the third son and heir of Robert, who had been crowned in his father's lifetime, was disputed by his younger brother Robert. The latter was encouraged by his mother Constance, who had always hated Henry, and by several powerful nobles, who were probably actuated by the desire of still farther reducing the power of the crown, and conceived no better means could be devised than by fanning the dissension between the royal brothers.

Robert took his measures so suddenly, and was so well supported, that Henry, with a retinue of only ten or eleven persons, was fain to save himself from captivity, by flying to the country of Robert, then Duke of Normandy, called the Magnificent, for protection. He was received in the strong castle of Fecamp, and the Duke, discharging the duty of a faithful vassal, raised all his forces in defence of his liege lord, against the traitorous attempts of his younger brother. The Duke of Normandy advanced into France with his forces, and ravaged

the country with such extreme severity, that he obtained for himself the nickname of Robert *le Diable*, or Robert the Devil, which gave rise to several fabulous legends, by which minstrels and romancers attempted to account for the origin of so strange an epithet. The two armies were on the point of engaging in a decisive conflict, when Robert, returning to a sense of duty, thought it better to submit to his elder brother, than run the risk of so great a crime as that of slaying him. He yielded accordingly, and was confirmed in his possession of the Duchy of Burgundy, after which the brothers lived together in harmony. Another rebellion against Henry, excited by the sons of the Count of Champagne for objects of their own, but with the professed purpose of deposing Henry, and placing on the throne his elder brother Eudes (who had been, on account of his mental imbecility, excluded from the succession in their father's lifetime), was put down without much difficulty.

Henry I., however, did not lose any opportunity which events offered of strengthening his throne. Disturbances arose concerning the part of Burgundy next to Mount Jura, which was not included in the portion assigned to the King's brother Robert, as above noticed. In the course of the wars which ensued, many forfeitures were made, and the reunion of the fiefs so forfeited with the crown, served to repair the losses it had sustained in the war between the brothers.

Neither did Henry I. fail to avail himself of troubles which arose in Normandy, although he

owed a great debt of gratitude to the Duke, whose timely aid had, as we have seen, replaced him on the throne. This prince, now advancing in age, began to think of making atonement for those violent actions which had procured him such ill-omened celebrity. For this purpose, as was the custom of that superstitious period, he conceived no mode of penitence could be so effectual as to go on a pilgrimage to Palestine, called the Holy Land. The desire to behold the scenes of the miracles and sufferings of the Founder of our Faith was sufficiently rational, and they might no doubt be often visited with effectual advantage to the pilgrim, since we can never be so much disposed to devotion as when we are placed in the very localities where these events have actually passed. But to abandon the moral duties which we are called to discharge, and to ramble over strange countries, neglecting our own interests, and those of the persons whom Providence has placed in dependence on us for support, is gross superstition, not rational religion. At this early period, however, it was a matter of firm belief, that men secured by such pilgrimages, not only the divine pardon for past faults and crimes, but indulgence for such as they should commit in future.

Duke Robert of Normandy then prepared for his pilgrimage to Jerusalem. Previous to his departure, he assembled a council of his prelates and great vassals; for you cannot have forgotten, that, like all the other feudatories of France, that prince had his own country divided among vassals, who held of him by the same tenure by which he held his

duchy of the King of France. He placed before the assembly his only son, whom he had by a young woman named Arlotta, the daughter of a tanner of Falaise. This was the famous William the Bastard, afterwards Conqueror of England, then only in his eighth year, whom, having no legitimate offspring, Robert was anxious to succeed him in the dukedom. He prevailed on the states of Normandy to recognise William in this capacity, recommended him to the protection of Henry of France, and appointed Alan, Duke of Bretagne, his guardian; he then set off upon his pilgrimage, which he accomplished, but died at Nicæa in Bithynia on his return homewards, in July 1035. The future conqueror of England was thus early put in a conspicuous situation, and thereby inured to difficulties and dangers, a course of training which undoubtedly contributed to mature and exercise those qualities which form the character of a great man. On the news of his father's death, the dukedom was claimed by Guy, Count of Mâcon, the late Duke's nephew, and a civil war commenced, in which the feudal vassals severally ranged themselves on the side of the two competitors, and committed all sorts of devastations on each other. King Henry favoured the cause of the young Duke, and sent troops to his assistance, but he was more effectually aided by his guardian the Duke of Bretagne, who succeeded in quashing the different insurrections against William's authority. His death, in 1040, deprived his charge of a most vigilant and able protector, and from that time till he reached his 20th year, the

young Duke was left in a great degree to his own resources, maintaining order among his turbulent barons rather by their jealousy of each other than their fear of him, or his power. Occasionally, he was compelled to yield to their violence; but matters assumed a very different aspect after 1047, when William completed his 20th year, and entered into full possession of his authority.

In that year, his valour, address, and activity in maintaining his ducal rights excited the jealousy and alarm of the great body of the Norman barons, who formed a league against him, and raised an army amounting to thirty thousand men, at the head of which was Guy of Mâcon, already mentioned. On this occasion William made a formal application to the King of France for assistance, which was immediately granted, and the King himself headed the contingent of troops (about 3000 men) destined to co-operate with the Duke's. The united French and Norman army engaged the opposing forces near Caen, at a place called *Val de Dunes*, and gained a decisive victory, in which very many of the insurgents were killed; and their leader Guy was shortly after obliged to surrender on capitulation. William, whose subjects were completely reduced to obedience, reaped all the advantage of this war. A quarrel in the following year with Geoffrey Martel, Count of Anjou, terminated equally to William's advantage. Five years afterwards the Duke of Normandy became the nephew of the King of France, by his marriage with Matilda, daughter of Baldwin Earl of

Flanders by Adela, the French monarch's sister. But this marriage, instead of cementing the former alliance between them, seems to have produced the very opposite effect. Henry, who seems to have been a weak-minded prince, began immediately afterwards to entertain either an enmity against William's person, or a jealousy of his power, which he took no pains to disguise. In 1054, the French king was induced to espouse the cause of William Count of Arques, a bastard brother of Duke Robert of Normandy, the present Duke's father. He had been a constant firebrand and disturber of the peace of the duchy ever since his nephew's accession, and had in consequence been dispossessed by him of his fiefs and his castle of Arques. The French force sent to assist the Count of Arques was led into an ambuscade and defeated. Henry returned before the end of the year, to revenge the affront thus sustained, with a much larger force, in two divisions, one of which was commanded by himself, and the other by his brother. William remained in front of the King's division and kept it in observation, but detached a part of his force, under four of his barons, to watch the other division, which they found at Mortemart, in the disorder of pillage, and without expectation of an enemy to face it. William's officers immediately commenced an attack, which was so rapid and sudden as to throw the French into the utmost confusion, and the battle very soon terminated in their complete defeat; their commander escaping only by the fleetness of his horse. William sent a

herald to inform the King of his misfortune, and Henry thought it advisable to make an immediate retreat. Four years afterwards he made another irruption into Normandy with no better success. In 1059, just before the inauguration of his son Philip, he sent envoys to William to treat for a peace, which was immediately effected. In those mutual feuds first began that enmity which occasioned so many bloody wars between the descendants of Henry, King of France, and of William, whose posterity succeeded him as Kings of England. In the year following (1060), Henry died, leaving his son and successor Philip, a child of eight years old, under the guardianship of Baldwin, Earl of Flanders, called, from his worth and religion, the Pious.

CHAPTER VII.

Minority of Philip—Origin of Chivalry—Training of the Young Knights—Ceremony of conferring Knighthood—Duties of those who acquired that Honour—Devotion to the Fair Sex—Wager of Battle—Tournaments—Chivalry took its rise in France—its Institutions were speedily adopted by the Normans, who found a field for the exercise of their valour in the Wars of Italy—Bravery and Conquests of the Guiscards—Battle of Durazzo.

[1060–1065.]

It is needless to say much more of the minority of Philip, than that, for a country so disturbed as France, it passed with little interruption of the public peace. This was chiefly owing to the wise Government of Count Baldwin, who remained always upon his guard against treachery from every quarter, taking care, at the same time, to give no pretence for such practices, by offending any of the great nobles. The Gascons indeed, a people of a fiery and changeable disposition, at one period meditated a revolt. But the Earl of Flanders, raising a considerable force, under pretence of a threatened invasion by the Saracens, led an army so suddenly into Aquitaine, as to render their design abortive.

But although France supplies in its interior few materials for history during this period, enterprises

were undertaken by individuals who emigrated from it during the reign of Henry I. and the minority of Philip, which strike the mind with astonishment, considering the greatness of the results, and the smallness of the means by which they were accomplished. The ruling character of the actors in the extraordinary scenes which I am about to relate to you, requires now to be stated. It was formed on principles in many respects different from those by which mere barbarians are guided, but varying no less from the views and notions which direct civilized nations in the present day.

On this account it becomes necessary, perhaps, to look far back into the commencement of society, to trace the original germ of that system of chivalry, which occasioned so many marvellous actions during the middle ages, and, in some important particulars, still preserves its effects upon our present manners.

The origin of the institution of knighthood, being the basis of chivalry, may be easily traced. The warriors of the ancient Gallic tribes who fought on horseback, and were more highly esteemed than the infantry, were termed by the Romans, *Equites*, or Horsemen, a rank of soldiery possessing considerable precedence over others. The Germans approached the modern ideas of knighthood more closely. The youth was not accounted fit for sharing the councils of his tribe, until the age of twenty-one years was attained, when, certain ceremonies being used, he was brought into the public assembly, invested with arms resembling those of

his elder brethren; and, in short, admitted to all the privileges of an adult warrior. The period of his admission into the councils of the freemen and warriors of the nation, added, of consequence, to the young man's importance, and qualified him to act as a chief and principal in war, where his services hitherto had been only used as a private soldier and follower.

These regulations led to the establishment of an order of champions among the Franks, and other German nations, who had achieved settlements in Gaul, or France as it was now called. Those who were ambitious to distinguish themselves by military exploits, which comprehended, speaking generally, almost all who held fiefs, whether of the sovereign or subjects, or who were otherwise entitled to the name of freemen, were carefully educated in horsemanship, the use of the lance and sword, and other warlike exercises. During this training, the young men, who were for the time called pages, resided as a part of the household of some king, noble, or man of rank, whose family was supposed to be a school of military discipline. When arrived at a certain age, and able to support the duties of war, the page became an esquire, and waited immediately upon his lord in battle, or during travel, serving him as a close and confidential attendant, and always ready to peril his life for him. This, though a species of servitude, was not reckoned degrading; but, on the contrary, the candidate for the highest honours of chivalry was not accounted worthy of them, until he had shown, by

the patient obedience of years as a squire, that he was worthy to command others in the capacity of a knight. When he was esteemed fit for the rank, the candidate was then dubbed knight. In the ceremony, some things were taken from the ancient mode of receiving the youths into the councils of the warriors, while their ancestors still inhabited the forests and swamps of Germany. A sword was girded around the aspirant's body; spurs were attached to his heels; the person by whom the ceremony was performed, struck him on the shoulders with the flat of his naked sword, and he was thus invested with a high military dignity, which, in a certain sense, placed him, however poor, upon a level with the wealthiest and most powerful nobles; for, in theory, all knights were equal, except in so far as they excelled each other in military fame. Other ceremonies were mingled with those we have mentioned, which had been introduced by the clergy, who naturally desired to attach to a solemnity so striking, some of the forms of religion. In many cases, accordingly, the night previous to his installation was passed by the young knight in some church or chapel, where he occupied himself in watching his arms and prayer. He also took a solemn oath to protect, at his utmost risk, the cause of the Catholic religion; to redress by his valour such wrongs, and abolish such evil customs, as he might discover; an Herculean task, at the time when almost every district groaned under the tyranny of some petty despot, who oppressed the poor without their having any one to

appeal to. The protection of widows and orphans, and of the female sex in all ranks of society, was also a part of his obligations. Lastly, fidelity to the king, chief, or lord, was sworn to by the young knight. By these means the order of knighthood was rendered in theory an association, bound by oath to forward the discharge of all the social duties which religion enjoined. It is not to be supposed that all, or many of the knights thus created, arrived even within a few points of the excellence which they were in this respect required to attain. Some, however, whose character in adhering to these vows had recommended them to the age as very perfect examples of chivalry, obtained the general approbation of prince and people; and he was most valued who exposed himself to the most extravagant dangers in the support of his character for courage and conduct.

It cannot be denied, that while the institutions of chivalry gave an air of romantic dignity and grandeur to the manners of the age, while the system continued to flourish, stigmatizing all that was base and selfish, and encouraging the knights, who would be held desirous of public applause, to seek it by exhibiting the purest faith, and the most undaunted courage, without being seduced from their purpose by the prospect of individual advantage, or deterred from it by the most alarming dangers, there mixed, nevertheless, with these generous maxims, much that was extravagant, wild, and sometimes absolutely ridiculous. Every knight, for example, was expected to devote his

affections to some fair lady, whom he was to serve for years, and with unaltered fidelity, although, perhaps, neither her rank in life, nor her inclinations, entitled him to expect any return of her affections; nay, although the lady, having conferred her hand on some other person, was prevented by her marriage vow from making any return to a passion of so equivocal a kind.

The system of chivalry also involved the great error of intrusting the guardianship of almost all civil rights to the decision of the sword, so that it was scarcely possible for a man of low rank to obtain justice, unless he was prepared to fight for it in the lists, or had some champion willing to do battle in his cause.

The very sports of chivalry involved the risk of life. The military exercises of tilts and tournaments in which the knights encountered each other with lances, each endeavouring to keep his own saddle, and at the same time to unhorse his antagonist, were their favourite pastime. On this occasion, each knight proclaimed the beauty and merit of his favourite fair, the influence of whose charms was supposed to stimulate him to victory, as her fame was, on the other hand, extended by his success. These warlike entertainments were the delight of the age, and though repeatedly denounced by the church as inhuman and unchristian, were solemnly practised, nevertheless, at the courts of the different sovereigns of Europe, who displayed their magnificence in the splendour with which the feats of chivalry were performed in their presence.

while the ladies looked on from the balconies, to grace the victors with their applause. The encounter professed to be a friendly one, an amicable trial in arms, and the combatants expressed the utmost regard for each other. But this did not prevent the lives of many brave champions being lost in the rough sport, which was rather a regular and modified kind of actual battle, than, as it professed to be, a mere imitation of war.

It is certain that, from the respect towards the female sex enjoined by the laws of chivalry, our modern times have derived that courteous deference and respect for women, which assigns to the ladies in the cultivated countries of Europe, an importance in society singularly contrasting with the state of degradation to which they are reduced in other quarters of the world. But it is more difficult to imagine how this high and romantic tone had been breathed into the institutions of the Franks while a barbarous people. It most probably originated in the institutions of the old Germans, which, as we before noticed, admitted the females of the tribe to a high degree of estimation; and as they did not permit their youth to marry till twenty-one years complete, their young warriors were trained up in the habit of distant respect, awe, and veneration for those who were to be the companions of their future lives.

It is impossible to fix a precise date to the origin of chivalry; but there can be no doubt, that, considered under a modern aspect, that remarkable system had its rise in France, to the natural man-

ners of which country the gallantry and devotion to the fair sex which it dictated—not to mention a certain tone of national and personal vanity which it was well calculated to advance—were peculiarly congenial.

In France, the young warrior, when admitted to the dignity of the new order, was called *chevalier*, that is *horseman* (from *cheval*, a horse); the ancient name of *eques*, translated into the language of the country, being seized upon to express the newly inaugurated knight. In Germany, the equivalent term of *ritter*, or rider, was made use of. The origin of the English term *knight*, applied to the same personage, is more doubtful. In the Anglo-Saxon language, where its meaning must be sought, *knecht* signifies a servant, and was applied, by way of distinction, to the select attendants on the prince (as we still call a soldier a servant of the king)—a title readily transferred to the newly-dubbed cavalier, as expressing a chosen and trained warrior. The English word does not, however, convey the idea of the origin of the institution so accurately as either the French or the German. Nor, although the order of chivalry rose to the highest esteem in Britain, do we suppose that it was, in a proper sense, known in the island, till, as you shall presently hear, it was brought thither by its Norman conquerors.

The Normans, we have seen, had now, for a considerable time, been domiciliated in France, and established themselves in the province to which they gave their name. They had become softened,

rather than corrupted or subdued, by the advantages and luxuries of their new settlements. They still retained unimpaired the daring and desperate courage with which their fathers had sallied from their frozen regions to ravage and to conquer the domains of a milder climate; but they exercised it with greater humanity, inspired doubtless by their conversion to Christianity. The new institutions of chivalry were speedily adopted by a nation which possessed already so many points in common with them. So brave a race, imbued from infancy with the principle that death was preferable, not only to flight, but to the slightest manifestation of fear, thought little of the dangers which might have terrified others in the exercise of chivalry. Like other nations of the north also, the Normans had practised, ere they left their own climate, that reverential and respectful conduct towards the female sex, which was another basis of chivalry. The tilt and tourney were, in the opinion of these warlike nations, only a variation of their own combats with clubs and swords, in which the pretence was sport, though often turned into earnest by the fury of the encounter. Above all, the more modern Normans united the utter carelessness of danger, and contempt of life, which characterised their ancestors who fought under Rollo, with the gay valour and love of adventure which was proper to the inhabitants of France; and these virtues were kept in frequent exercise by the quarrels of their duke with his sovereign of France, and with his compeers, the great vassals of that crown. Chi-

valry flourished in so fertile a soil, and the Norman knights held the first rank among those of Europe. Such being their character, a part of this brave nation found sudden exercise for their feats of arms in the wars of Italy, where they made conquests not less flattering to their vanity and gratifying to their love of glory, than productive of solid advantages. The military expeditions which form so proud a feature in their history during the eleventh century, present us with deeds which surpass, if possible, all the wonders and marvels of chivalrous romance, in the bold daring which they display.

To understand this, you must be informed, that, after the descendants of Charlemagne had degenerated into feeble princes, the towns and coasts of Italy became divided between the Greeks (who reclaimed the possession of that fine country as the original seat of the empire, which was removed to Constantinople by Constantine) and the Saracens. The latter people had made incursions upon various provinces of Christian Europe for the purpose of conquering and converting the inhabitants to their faith. They made themselves masters of Sicily, and colonized it. The dominions of the present kingdom of Naples next invited their arms, and a strong colony, for a long time maintained at Bari, placed the Adriatic gulf under the command of their naval power. Notwithstanding this, the Greeks, a politic and sagacious nation, contrived to recover Bari, and to establish their authority in a great part of the eastern half of Italy. Luxury,

and its enervating consequences, had, however, rendered their armies very unfit to meet the eastern fanatics. But the empire of Constantinople still commanded the services of experienced and able generals, who made up the deficiencies of their own troops by the daring courage of Franks, Lombards, and other barbarians, whom they enlisted in their cause. The Greeks were also masters of the art of negotiation, and little scrupulous in keeping the terms which they had made, when an opportunity occurred of gaining an advantage, though at the expense of good faith. By such means, the Greeks maintained a doubtful struggle with the Saracens, which of them should obtain the exclusive possession of Italy.

About this period the natives of Normandy, whose temper and habits we have just been describing, began to think of bettering their fortunes, by undertaking expeditions on their own account, to free the peninsula of Italy at once from the bondage of the Greeks and of the Saracens. The former they considered as effeminate tyrants, as well as heretics, as the Greek church holds some tenets different from that of Rome. As to the Saracens, their character of infidels was sufficient to render war against them not only lawful, but a religious and meritorious duty. The first attempts of these Norman adventurers were undertaken with too great inferiority of numbers to be decidedly successful. For a time they were only remarkable for their desperate courage, which displayed itself alternately in behalf of Germans, Greeks, and even

Saracens, or whatever party was best able to reward their exertions; and it was observed that victory seemed to attend in every case the side on which they fought. Their numbers, however, were gradually increased by additional recruits from their own country of Normandy, and by some Italians, whom they admitted into their ranks, on the condition of adopting their customs, and emulating their valour.

In the year 1029, the Normans in Italy assumed a more national appearance, and fixed their head-quarters at Aversa, a town conferred on them by the Duke of Naples. Here they lived under the government of counts, or chieftains, of their own election; and, joining their forces with those of the Greek emperor, did much to achieve the reconquest of Sicily. Being ungratefully requited by the Grecian general, Maniaces, the Normans took arms to punish the ingratitude of their allies. The Greeks assembled a large army, and, confident in their numbers, sent to the Normans to offer them either battle or a safe retreat. "To battle!" exclaimed the Normans, while one of their knights struck down with a blow of his fist the horse of the Grecian messenger. The Greeks, notwithstanding their superiority in numbers, sustained a total defeat, and the Normans gained possession of a great part of their dominions in Apulia, a few strong places excepted. They now arrayed their forces under the command of twelve counts, the chief of whom took the title of Count of Apulia.

The first who held this title of eminence was a

distinguished warrior named William Fer-a-Bracia, or Iron-arm, so called from his irresistible strength, which he displayed at the expense of both the Greeks and Saracens. But his renown was eclipsed by that of the celebrated Robert Guiscard, a Norman, descended from a race of Vavasours, or petty nobles, who had originally their family seat at Hauteville in Normandy. Robert was the most distinguished among the family of Tancred de Hauteville, although consisting of twelve sons, all of whom, as they severally became of age, forsook their father's castle, and followed the steps of their elder brother, to seek glory or death in the wars of Italy. They were distinguished by their valour and skill in obscure warfare, until the convulsed state of the times permitted them to start forth as leaders and as heroes. Wherever any of these brethren appeared, it would seem that fortune attached herself to the standard under which they fought. The great odds of numbers never prevented their obtaining victory; the utmost severity of suffering or distress never effected the slightest change in their unyielding perseverance. The head of this heroic family raised himself from the rank of count to that of duke, and, in fact, of sovereign prince of Apulia and Calabria. The valour of his brother, Roger, achieved the conquest of Sicily from the Saracens, and obtained him the sovereignty with the title of count. Robert Guiscard himself waged open war on Alexius Comnenus, the Grecian Emperor, and in the celebrated combat of Durazzo, gained a bloody and well-disputed vic-

tory, which shook the very foundations of the imperial throne, although then occupied by a sovereign of peculiar sagacity and courage. But four years afterwards, Guiscard, who had achieved so many wonders, died in his seventieth year, while still waging war against Alexius, and endeavouring, by improving his old and devising new resources, to make up the losses he had sustained, rather by the inclemency of the elements than by the sword of the enemy. A.D. 1085.

The male line of this daring adventurer became extinct, but that of Roger, Count of Sicily, survived, to represent the courage, the enterprise, and the ambition of the House of Guiscard. The exploits of the Normans in Italy, and in the East, abound with many interesting and highly chivalrous stories which would deserve your attention, and well repay me for the trouble of compiling them; but their connexion with the History of France is not so close as to permit them to enter into the present collection. A not less brilliant, and much more durable effect, of the Norman valour, was produced by the conquest of England, another important episode in the history of France.

CHAPTER VIII.

Saxon Conquest of England—Saxon Heptarchy—Court of Edward the Confessor—Dislike between the English and Normans—Death of Edward, and Election of Harold—Preparations of William of Normandy for invading England—Invasion and Defeat of Harold of Norway—Battle of Hastings—Effects of the Norman Conquest—Forest Laws—Couvrefeu—The Language changed by the intermixture of Norman-French—Introduction of Chivalry—Connexion with Continental Politics, which was the consequence of England falling into the hands of the Duke of Normandy.

[1066.]

THE Norman Conquest—a great event, the influence of which is felt even to our own day—was for many centuries the abundant source of wars as inveterate and bloody as the world ever saw. Like other revolutions of that destructive period, it had its remote origin in the feeble and decayed state in which the Romans left the island of Britain, or at least its southern and more fertile moiety, when they withdrew their experienced legions from the defence of the colonists, and, having first deprived them of arms, and allowed their military habits to fall into disuse, left them, unaided, to protect themselves against the unconquered barbarians of the northern parts of the island, then termed Scots and

Picts. Finding themselves exposed to the attacks of these fierce people, it is well known that the dispirited Britons summoned to their assistance the Saxons, a people inhabiting the north of Germany and the southern shores of the Baltic. A nation thus calling in the aid of stranger tribes exposes itself of course to their rapacity. The Saxons repelled indeed the irruptions of the northern barbarians; but summoning more of their brethren to share the conquest of a country which the natives could not defend, they gradually occupied the fertile lowlands of the island, which became from them first distinguished by the name of England (land of the Anglo-Saxons), and drove the natives, who continued their resistance, into the northern mountains of Westmoreland and Cumberland, and the provinces now called Wales, in which last country the remains of the primitive Gael or Celtic inhabitants of the island are still to be found. This Saxon conquest formed a nation not dissimilar in manners to that of the Franks, as the victors in some degree incorporated with their own nation the conquered Britons and Roman colonists.

The Anglo-Saxons, like the Franks, had no very distinct notions of hereditary succession; and to add to this great inconvenience, the invaders had been drawn from separate tribes, each of which expected their portion of the spoil in settlements, and claimed the privilege of recognising an independent king or chieftain of their own. Hence the impolitic division of England into seven petty kingdoms,

called the Heptarchy, which existed, exclusive of the tract of country still possessed by the native Britons. A series of intrigues, and of bloody, though petty wars, was the natural consequence of the jarring claims of the little tyrants of each state. During these contests, the country, as a whole, suffered much, though for some time no one kinglet could obtain any decided advantage.

Such small kingdoms have, nevertheless, the same propensity to unite with and merge into each other which may be observed in drops of water running down a plate of glass. By succession, by composition, by conquest, the petty states of the Heptarchy were at length melted down into one monarchy, which suffered its full share in the distresses inflicted upon Europe by the invasion of the Normans Indeed, at that time, the Danes, being the nation of Northmen who chiefly harassed the coasts of England, were able to establish a dynasty of their own on the English throne, a disgrace to which France had never stooped.

On the death of Hardicanute, however, the last Danish prince, the Saxons were again enabled to restore the crown of England to their own royal family, by the election of Edward, called the Confessor, to that dignity. It was chiefly in this prince's reign that the increasing intercourse between the kingdom of England and the Duchy of Normandy prepared both countries for the important changes which afterwards took place.

The Normans, it must be remembered, were a

race possessed of as much civilisation as the times admitted, who valued themselves, and were prized in foreign nations, both on account of the elevated and ardent chivalry which they displayed in battle, and the lofty, and somewhat fantastic manners, which were then accounted courtesy in civil life. In their architecture, their theory of feudal law, their habits of society, their rules of hunting, and their practice of military discipline, they differed in many respects from, and claimed a superiority over, the more unrefined Saxons, for whose institutions, manners, and customs, the courtly and chivalrous Normans professed the most sovereign contempt. But England was a land in which estates were to be acquired, and the Normans, who were always of a restless and adventurous disposition, flocked in numbers to the court of Edward the Confessor, where they were courteously received, and liberally provided for, especially in the church. The King himself had Norman blood in his veins, his mother Emma being a daughter of Richard I. Duke of Normandy, grandson of Rollo, or Robert, the founder of the principality. Besides, in his youth, the Saxon king had found refuge at the court of Normandy, during the Danish invasion of England, and had become attached to the people and their mode of life; the flattering and polite manners of the courtiers having something in them more agreeable to a youthful prince, than the blunt, hardy, and almost rude character, of his own countrymen. Edward, in consequence of this partiality, introduced into his court the manners,

customs, and language of the Normans. The latter was French, for the descendants of Rollo had long forgotten the Danish, or Norse language, spoken by their fathers.

The Saxons of England saw, with great resentment, the preference given by the King to their Norman neighbours. They were proud of the freedom of their own constitution, which gave to an assembly of their estates, called Wittenagemot, or Convention of Wise Men, a wholesome control over the will of the sovereign, and secured due protection to the lives and liberties of the subject, affording the groundwork of that stubborn and steady independence of principle, which has distinguished the bulk of the English nation for so many ages. They laughed at and ridiculed the affected refinement of the Normans, and, confident in their own courage and their own weapons, were willing to bid defiance to those mail-clad strangers, armed as they were with bows and arrows, the artillery of the period, in which the Normans were held to excel. These missiles could not be totally unknown in Britain, but the archers of Normandy were disciplined, and acted in battle as a separate body. These mutual subjects for scorn and jealousy created dislike and hatred between the English and their Norman visitors.

At the head of the English, or rather Saxon interest, were the powerful Godwin, Earl of Kent, and his sons. At their instigation, the Norman aliens were expelled from England, and the foundation of a lasting animosity laid between the two

nations. Edward, the reigning monarch, who was not a man of strong mind, retained, however, his partiality for his mother's countrymen. He continued to keep up an intimate correspondence with the Duke of Normandy, and appears to have had the intention of bequeathing to him his kingdom of England. This was, no doubt, a great infringement of the laws, which assigned the king only a life interest in his kingdom; and besides, such a bequest amounted to a disinheritance of the legitimate heir, Edgar Atheling. But Edgar was absent in Hungary; and the conduct of Edward, if not blameless, was at least excusable in a well-meaning, but weak monarch.

Upon the death of Edward, Harold, one of the sons of Earl Godwin, confident in his own great power, extensive influence, and known reputation for sagacity and courage, re- A.D. 1066. solved to disregard alike the claim of Edgar Atheling, and that which was preferred by his more formidable Norman competitor. It is true, that Harold, being driven ashore on the coast of Normandy, had taken an oath to favour the pretensions of Duke William to the English throne, after the death of Edward the Confessor; but he denied that such an oath was binding, having been, as he alleged, forcibly compelled to take it. He availed himself, therefore, of his extensive influence with the English nobles, obtained the office of king by the voice of the assembled states, assumed the crown, and was consecrated by the Archbishop of Canterbury.

The throne of which Harold had thus taken possession, was instantly menaced from two opposite quarters. The first was his own brother Tosti, who, in conjunction with Harold Hardrada, King of Norway, a veteran warrior, threatened instant invasion. The other was the Duke of Normandy, who laid claim to the crown of England on the alleged bequest of Edward the Confessor, and on the oath of Harold to support it. Of this last, as the most pressing danger, it is necessary to speak at some length.

William of Normandy, though an illegitimate son, had succeeded to the Dukedom of Normandy as the inheritance of his father, and had been engaged during his youth in so many disputes and wars, both with his own insurgent nobility, and with his liege lord, the King of France, that his understanding was matured and his authority confirmed, so as to give him confidence to embark in the daring expedition which he meditated, being nothing less than the conquest of a kingdom far more extensive, and a people much more numerous, than his own. He was encouraged in his attempt by the undaunted valour which characterised his Norman subjects, and of which they had given such signal proofs in the desperate adventures of Robert Guiscard and his brethren already alluded to. If, he might argue, the sons of a simple knight, who led a petty band of ten lances, had, by their indomitable valour, rendered their small resources available to gain great battles, and establish fair principalities, what success might not be anticipat-

ed from an army composed entirely of Norman warriors, and headed by their duke himself? Still, however, the forces of Normandy bore a fearful disproportion to those of the kingdom which he purposed to invade; and Duke William strove to balance the superiority by every means in his power.

For this purpose, he availed himself of his relationship to Baldwin, called the Pious, Earl of Flanders, whose daughter he had married. Baldwin was Regent of France during the minority of Philip the First, and, by his license and management, the Duke of Normandy was permitted to publish throughout France an invitation to all brave warriors of that kingdom, who wished to gain honour or wealth, to join him in his expedition. A vast number of knights and warriors, from all parts of France, eagerly embraced the invitation, and hastened to join an expedition of a character so peculiarly seductive to the imaginations of the age.

Count Baldwin has been, in his capacity of Regent of France, censured for the facilities which he afforded to a vassal of that kingdom, already too powerful, to raise himself to a pitch of equality with his liege lord, as was the final consequence of this expedition. But the issue of the attempt was doubtful, and might have been unsuccessful, in which case the power of the Duke, instead of being increased, must have been broken by the invasion of England. Besides, it must for ever remain a question, whether, in granting these means of augmenting the Norman army, Baldwin did not

take the best means of averting the risk of a war between France and Normandy, by engaging William in a distant and hazardous enterprise, the brilliant success of which could not be foreseen.

The army which the Duke assembled for this important expedition amounted to fifty thousand horse, and ten thousand infantry. These were all chosen men, and the disproportion between the cavalry and infantry showed William's superiority in the force which was then held the most effective part of an army. To transport this large body of men, William constructed, or assembled a fleet of three thousand vessels; and to sanctify his undertaking, he obtained the benediction of the Pope, who sent him a consecrated standard, and excommunicated Harold and his adherents.

While this cloud was gathering on the coast of Normandy, the attention of Harold was withdrawn from its progress by the danger yet more imminent, which has been already alluded to. His brother Tosti, and Harold Hardrada, King of Norway, a gigantic champion and valiant warrior, had arrived on the north coast of England with a large army, sailed up the Humber, and after gaining several advantages, had obtained possession of York. Harold, without a moment's delay, marched against this new enemy, and was not long before he came up with them. Previously, however, to commencing his attack, he endeavoured, by offering terms to his brother Tosti, to induce him to withdraw from his northern ally. "But if I accept these conditions," said Tosti, "what shall be the compensation to the

King of Norway, my ally?"—"Seven feet of English land," answered the envoy; "or, as Hardrada is a giant, perhaps a little more." Their conference was broken off, and a dreadful battle, at Stamford bridge, near York, A.D. 1066. immediately followed. The armies fought with incredible valour, and there was great slaughter on both sides; but Harold of Norway lost his life, as well as Tosti, while Harold of England, though enfeebled by the loss of many of his best troops, remained victorious. But he was instantly called upon to meet more formidable adversaries in William and his army, who had disembarked at Pevensey in Sussex, on Michaelmas day. Three days only had intervened between the defeat of the Norwegians, and the landing of the Normans on the English coast.

The Duke of Normandy was speedily apprized that Harold was approaching at the head of an army flushed with victory. William, who had no reinforcements to expect, determined not to avoid a battle. Harold, though he might more prudently have delayed till he recruited his diminished army, determined to seek for an encounter without loss of time. The armies met on the fatal and memorable field of Hastings, on the 14th of October.

Taillefer, a warrior as well as minstrel of eminence at the court of the Duke of Normandy, began the fight. He sung the war-song of Roland, composed on the victories of Charlemagne. As he advanced, he played tricks with his sword, which he brandished in the air, tossing it up, and again

catching it with his hand, to mark, doubtless, his calm courage and self-possession. In this manner he rushed on the English ranks, killed two men, and was himself slain by a third. The battle then joined with incredible fury. The English were chiefly drawn up in one solid mass, impenetrable by cavalry. No effort of Duke William's brilliant chivalry, though led on by himself in person, could make the least impression upon this serried phalanx. At length a military stratagem accomplished what mere force had failed in. A body of a thousand Norman horse charged the English with apparent fury, but retreating in well-dissembled panic, tempted a considerable part of their enemies to quit their ranks in pursuit. Those who thus broke their array were cut off by the Norman main body, as, becoming aware of the stratagem, they endeavoured to regain their ranks. But the encounter continued obstinate. In this dreadful battle, which was to decide the fate of England, the Normans derived great advantage from their skill in the long-bow. At length Duke William directed his archers, instead of shooting their arrows horizontally against the faces of the English, to discharge their volleys into the air, so that they might come down upon the heads of the Saxon phalanx with accumulated weight and effect. This species of annoyance did much mischief among the more distant ranks, on whom they descended like hail. One shaft, more fortunate than the rest, decided the fate of this obstinate battle, by striking Harold in the face, and piercing through his eye into the brain.

The death of Harold terminated a conflict, one of the most obstinate, as it was by far the most important, in the annals of England. The immediate success of William's expedition was insured by the death of the English monarch; for, by submission or force, the Conqueror annexed to his dominions the whole kingdom of England; and though vexed by repeated rebellions among his new subjects, and even among the Normans themselves, disappointed with the share of spoil assigned them, he held, nevertheless, with a firm grasp, the advantages which he had gained by his wisdom and courage.

It is impossible to return to the history of France, from which this is a digression, without pausing to consider the effect of the Norman conquest of England, in its immediate, as well as in its more remote consequences. The immediate consequence was, that the conquered Saxons became, speaking generally, the serfs, or bondsmen, of the victorious Normans, and that the conqueror distributed his new acquisitions of territory among the valiant partners of his enterprise. In many cases, some colour of right was given to this partition, as where a Saxon maiden, who had succeeded a father or brother slain at Hastings, or elsewhere, in some large inheritance, was bestowed in marriage by the conqueror, on one of his fortunate and favoured companions in arms. More frequently, the estates of Saxons of high birth and great property were forfeited for alleged insurrection against their new master.

By the Conquest, the system of feudal law was

introduced into England in full vigour, and the Norman knights and nobles received grants of the richest manors and baronies of the crown, to be held of the king by military service. These they again granted in smaller portions, chiefly to their own countrymen, who should depend on them, as they did upon the monarch. Such part of the land as the proprietors thought proper to retain for their own use, was cultivated for their advantage by the Saxon bondsmen, the haughty Norman disdaining to employ himself in any occupation save that of battle, tournament, or hunting.

For this last purpose, they introduced into England the severe and unjust laws of Normandy and France, which, under the highest and most disproportioned penalties, reserved the pleasures of the chase to the great vassals alone. William the Conqueror himself led the way in his extravagant passion for the chase; and the ruthlessness with which he sacrificed to his love of silvan sports the comfort and happiness of his new people, is almost inconceivable. In the county of Hampshire alone, an immense woodland tract of sixty-three thousand acres, still termed the New Forest, was reduced to a mere waste, all towns and dwellings of man, as well as the churches intended for the worship of God, being utterly destroyed, and the district reserved exclusively for the abode of wild animals, and the exercise of hunting.

Other laws, peculiarly annoying to the lower orders of English, were introduced, instead of the mild code administered by their former monarchs.

The oppressed natives were easily driven into rebellion, which answered so far the purpose of the Conqueror, as it gave pretence for new confiscations, by which he enriched his followers. At length, threatened insurrections among the English were so general, and so much suspected, that the memorable law of *Curfew* or *Couvrefeu*, was enacted, by which all the lower classes were compelled to extinguish their fires or lights at the sound of a bell, which rung towards bedtime. Numerous Norman garrisons, scattered over the country, at once secured to the victors undisturbed possession of the land, and enforced the subjection of the wretched inhabitants.

In a word, the whole kingdom of England was divided between the Normans, who were the lords and gentry, and the Saxons, who, with a few exceptions, became the cultivators of the soil. These two races did not even enjoy the ordinary means of communicating together, for the Normans spoke French, as well as the king and courtiers; the courts of law used the same language, and the common people alone used or understood the Saxon, which they employed in their own affairs. This separation of language lasted till about a hundred years after the Conquest, when the English language began to be used by all the inhabitants of the kingdom. The gentlemen were, in general, acquainted with French also, but every Englishman spoke the mixed language, which had been gradually formed between the Norman-French and the Anglo-Saxon. This is the language which has

finally superseded the use of all others in England, the language of Newton and Bacon, the language of Milton and Shakspeare, in which wisdom and genius have achieved so much to instruct and delight mankind.

The Norman Conquest had another beneficial consequence, though it operated but slowly. We have already said, that the conquerors, when compared with the vanquished, were a race of a civilized and refined character, who affected the highest tone of chivalry, mingled as it was with much that was gallant, certainly, and that aspired to be laudable. It is probable, that immediately after the battle of Hastings, this distinction in manners only operated to the disadvantage of the humbled Saxons, whose rusticity afforded their conquerors an additional reason for oppressing them, as beings of a lower caste, and beneath their regard. But in time the conquerors and the conquered began to mingle together and assimilate themselves to each other; and there can be no doubt that the refinement of the chivalrous Normans extended its influence, in part at least, to the blunter and ruder Saxons, and introduced among them the spirit of unblemished honour and uncontaminated faith, which was taught by the doctrines of chivalry, if not always regularly practised. On the other hand, the Anglo-Saxons preserved that sense of their rights, and jealousy of their independence, which has been so long the proud characteristic of the English people.

It was, perhaps, less for the future advantage of

Britain, that in becoming part of the dominions of the Duke of Normandy, the country was necessarily involved in the vortex of continental politics and continental quarrels, with which her insular situation left her naturally unconnected. It is not indeed unlikely that England, whenever she came to a feeling of her own strength, might have been induced to take an interest in the affairs of her nearest neighbours; but it is not improbable that her eyes would have been first turned to make conquests within her own shores, in which case Scotland, in all human probability, must have been completely and permanently subdued, and the crown of all Britain, as well perhaps as that of Ireland, established on the brow of the English monarchs, before they engaged in the more distant, more doubtful, and less politic hostilities with France. But it is in vain to speculate on what might have been. It was a necessary consequence of what was, that the affairs of France would continue to interest the King of England, so long as the ducal crown of Normandy, and the feudal rights attached to it, were united in the person of that sovereign. And if the domestic security of England was disturbed, by her involvement in wars with which she had no proper concern, it was some compensation that several brilliant pages were added to her chronicles, recording victories, which, though fruitless, and gained by great sacrifices, remain noble proofs of valour and magnanimity.

CHAPTER IX.

Rebellion of Robert against his Father, William the Conqueror, instigated by Philip I. of France—Profligacy of Philip—Wise Conduct of Louis—Attempt of Philip's wife to poison Louis—Death of Philip Origin of the Crusades—Council of Clermont—Army of Crusaders led by Peter the Hermit—its Disasters—Crusade fitted out by the four principal Monarchs of Europe—its reception by the Greek Emperor—Capture of Nicæa—Battle of Dorylæum—Siege of Antioch—Siege and Capture of Jerusalem—Subjugation of Palestine—Erection of the Latin Kingdom of Jerusalem.

[1066—1100.]

PHILIP I. of France was but fourteen years of age, when, by this fortunate attempt against England, his vassal the Duke of Normandy started up king of a realm as ample and fair as his own, and which, though so recently acquired, and disquieted by insurrections, was, upon the whole, ruled by the Conqueror with more absolute sway than France itself by the descendant of Capet.

Philip's jealousy of his great vassal began to show itself in every way so soon as he arrived at years of maturity. In 1077 he intrigued with William's eldest son, Robert, and encouraged him to rebel against his father. The pretext assigned by Robert for his unnatural conduct, was, that

William, during a severe illness, soon after his conquest of England, had caused Robert be recognised as his successor in the duchy, and receive the homage of his vassals; but on his recovery shortly after, he resumed the reins of authority, and had ever since refused, contrary to promise, to allow him any share in the administration of Normandy. The Duke's answer to all his son's applications was couched in the homely but expressive phrase, that he was not willing to throw off his clothes before he went to bed, or part with his dominions before his death.

Under the pretence, nevertheless, that his father had not fulfilled his engagement, Robert, who was a rash young man, and of fiery passions, though in his person brave and generous, actually rebelled against his father, and held out against him the small fortified place of Gerberoi, a station very convenient for the annoyance of Normandy. William was incensed at the rebellious conduct of his son, and hastened to lay siege to the place of his retreat. The garrison made a sally, headed by Prince Robert in person. This leader, one of the bravest men of his time, singled out for his antagonist a knight who appeared in front of the besiegers, in armour, and having his face covered by the vizor of his helmet. The onset of the young and fiery prince bore down his antagonist, horse and man; and Robert, placing his lance to the throat of the dismounted cavalier, would have taken his life, had he not recognised, by the accents in which the answer was returned, that he was in the act of slaying

his own father. Shocked at this discovery, he flung himself from his horse, and, assisting his father to rise, held the stirrup to him till he mounted it in his stead.

But notwithstanding an incident so touching at once and terrible, no reconciliation between the father and son took place, and the latter continued a sort of knight-errant in France, and other countries, until his father's death. In 1087, the disputes between the Kings of France and England, for the possession of the province of Vexin, led to an open rupture, which cost William his life. He caught an inflammatory complaint, while directing in person the conflagration of the town of Mantes, and the destruction of the country around. He made immediate dispositions for securing the crown of England to his second son William Rufus, or the Red. But although incensed against his eldest son Robert, who was still an exile, William made no attempt to deprive him of the duchy of Normandy, regarding it probably as his hereditary right. To his third son, Henry, he left nothing but a sum of money.

A.D 1087.

While these changes were taking place in the family and dominions of his formidable vassal and rival, Philip was engaged in petty wars, by means of which, while affecting to mediate between his dissatisfied peers, he contrived to weaken both the contending parties, and to strengthen the crown at their expense The morals of this prince were not more strict than his political conscience. Of this he gave an instance productive of great scan-

dal, in his ill treatment of his wife Bertha, and marrying the Countess Bertrade. This lady was the third wife of Fulk, Count of Anjou, called Rechin, or the Morose, and extremely beautiful. Philip became enamoured of her, and to enjoy her society, went so far as to divorce his own wife, and to procure Bertrade's divorce from her husband, after which he married her. The court of Rome interfered in vain, and neither the admonitions of Pope or Council, nor the excommunication which was pronounced against both parties, could induce the King to separate from her By this conduct, the authority of Philip became as much degraded as his personal character He was neglected and despised, even by his immediate vassals; and the confusion which ensued was so great as to throw all France into disorder

At length, the King saw fit in some degree to appease these disturbances, by associating in the throne, Louis, the remaining son whom he had by his first queen, Bertha, by whose activity and judicious exertions, tranquillity was in some measure restored to the distracted kingdom. This active prince might be said to do all that his father had neglected. He kept always around him a body of determined men, with whom he marched with rapidity against the vassals of the crown, who were perpetually in insurrection, and thus gradually acquired general respect and popularity.

Bertrade, in the mean while, was the only person to whom the young prince's conduct was unacceptable. She exerted her unbounded influence over

her husband to the prejudice of his son. When Louis went to England to be present at the coronation of Henry I., and to be dubbed a knight by that monarch, Bertrade caused a letter to be written to Henry, bearing her husband's seal, requesting him to arrest and imprison the young prince. Henry was incapable of such an act of treachery, informed Louis of it, and recommended him to return home. Philip, on being remonstrated with by his son, disavowed all knowledge of the letter.

The dangers of Louis were increased on his return to France, for a slow poison was administered to him, which had such an effect upon his constitution, that though he recovered his health in other respects, his complexion remained ever afterwards of a deadly pale. Louis, upon receiving this new injury, was wellnigh provoked to break entirely with his father; and it is probable that the cause of the son would have been adopted by the kingdom in general, had not Philip become aware of his danger. Overcome by his authority, or terrified at the consequences of Louis's resentment, Bertrade made the most humble submissions to that prince, succeeded in a reconciliation, and entertained, or affected, during her future life, the utmost deference, and even affection for him, to the extent of confiding to him the safety and support of the two children whom she had born to his father.

The troubles of France were in some degree allayed by the agreement between the father and son; and the latter, after this period, took chiefly

on himself the active administration of the government, while the father continued to indulge in the pleasures of luxury and retirement with Bertrade, on whom he doted. Latterly, indeed, he seems to have reconciled the church to his connexion with her, since she receives, in the French annals, the title of queen, and her children are, at the same time, spoken of as legitimate. The acquiescence of the Pope in this promotion of the divorced Countess of Anjou into a legitimate Queen of France, was but imperfectly expressed; and was purchased, moreover, by such humble submission to the papal see, as degraded the King in the eyes of his own subjects. Philip died at the age of sixty, leaving his son Louis, with diminished resources, to struggle with all the evils which his father's weak government, and the sacrifice of his royal authority to his selfish love of pleasure, had brought upon his country. A.D. 1108.

About this time, mainly by the efforts of a single individual, falling in remarkably with the opinions and manners of the age, the attention of Europe was attracted by the commencement of the Crusades, a species of war of a religious character, undertaken, as was pretended by its priestly instigators, by an express command from Heaven, for the recovery of Palestine, or the Holy Land, from the hands of the infidel tribes into whose possession it had fallen. To effect this, the Christian princes were required to renounce all wars and disputes among themselves, and to unite their

forces in one great effort against the common enemy of Christianity.

I have already told you that the devotional journeys, called pilgrimages, to the tombs of the religious persons mentioned in Scripture, or the places where they had wrought their miracles, were accounted in those times meritorious displays of piety, the performance of which, by the tenets of the Catholic Church, was held the surest and most acceptable mode of averting the wrath of Heaven, for past transgressions, or exhibiting gratitude for mercies received. Men who were in difficulties or in dangers often made a vow, that, in the event of their being extricated, they would make a journey to some sanctified shrine in Italy or in Palestine, and there testify their sense of the protection of Heaven, by alms, prayers, and gifts to the church. The Holy Sepulchre itself, of which the site was handed down by tradition, was naturally a principal object of these religious peregrinations, as best entitled to the respect and adoration of all Christians.

While Palestine remained a part of the Grecian or Eastern Empire, the access of the European pilgrims to the holy places which they desired to visit was naturally facilitated by every means in the power of the Christian governors of the provinces where they lay, and of the priests to whose keeping these places were committed. Their churches were enriched by the gifts which failed not to express the devotion of the pilgrims, and the vanity of the priests was flattered by the resort

of so many persons of consequence from the most distant parts of Christendom, to worship at their peculiar shrines.

Even when, in the course of the tenth century, the Holy Land fell under the power of the Saracens, that people, although votaries of another faith, felt their own interest in permitting, under payment of a certain capitation tax, the concourse of European pilgrims to Jerusalem, and other places which they accounted sacred. In their intercourse with Christian princes of eminence, the Califs, or successors of Mahomet, derived a certain consequence from being masters of Jerusalem; and Haroun Alraschid, one of the most important of those princes, found no more acceptable compliment to Charlemagne, with whom he maintained a friendly intercourse, than to send to the Frank Emperor the keys of the Holy Sepulchre. But when the power of the Saracens was in a great measure divided or destroyed, and the Turks, also followers of Mahomet, but a far more rude and fanatical race, became masters of Jerusalem, the treatment of the Christians, whether natives of Palestine, or pilgrims who came to worship there, was in every respect changed for the worse. The Saracens, a civilized and refined people compared with the Turks, had governed the country under fixed rules of tribute, and preferred the moderate, but secure profit, derived from the taxes imposed on the pilgrims, to that which might be obtained by a system of robbery, plunder, and ill usage. But the Turks, a fiercer, more bigoted, and more

shortsighted race, preferred the pleasure of insulting and maltreating the Christians, whom they contemned and hated, and not only harassed them by the most exorbitant exactions, but often added to these personal ill usage of the most revolting kind. The pilgrims were entirely at the mercy of every paltry Turkish officer, and an act of devotion, in itself perilous and expensive, was rendered too frequently an introduction to martyrdom. The clergy of the Christians were insulted, stript, and thrown into dungeons; nor was any circumstance omitted by the savage masters of the Holy City, which could show the pilgrims at how great a hazard they must in future expect permission to pay their homage there.

These evils had been sufficiently felt by all who had visited the East, but at length they made so strong an impression on the spirit of one man, that, like fire alighting among materials highly combustible, the flame spread throughout all Europe. The person who effected so great a sensation by such slight means, was called Peter the Hermit. He was, we are informed, of a slight and indifferent figure, which sometimes exposed him to be neglected; but he was a powerful orator. He had himself been a pilgrim in Palestine, and possessed the impressive requisite that he could bear testimony as an eyewitness to the atrocities of the Turks, and the sufferings of the Christians. He repaired from court to court, from castle to castle, from city to city, setting forth at each the shame done to Christendom, in leaving the holiest places

connected with her religion in possession of a heathen and barbarous foe. He appealed to the religion of one sovereign, to the fears of another, to the spirit of chivalry professed by them all. Urban II., then Pope, saw the importance of uniting the European nations, soldiers by habit and inclination, in a task so honourable to religion, and so likely to give importance to the Roman See. At the Council of Clermont, ambassadors from the Grecian Emperor were introduced to the assembly, who, with humble deference, stated to the prelates and the lay chivalry of Europe the dangers to their Christian sovereign, arising from the increasing strength of the Moslem empire, by which he was surrounded, and, forgetting the wordy and assuming language which they were accustomed to use, supplicated, with humiliating earnestness, the advantage of some assistance from Europe. The Pontiff himself set forth the advantage, or rather necessity of laying all meaner or more worldly tasks aside, until the Holy Land should be freed from the heathen usurpers, who were its tyrants To all, however criminal, who should lend aid to this sacred warfare, Urban promised a full remission of their sins here, and an indubitable portion of the joys of heaven hereafter. He then appealed to the temporal princes, with the enthusiastic quotation of such texts of Scripture as were most likely to inflame their natural valour. "Gird on your swords," he said, "ye men of valour; it is our part to pray, it is yours to fight. It is ours, with Moses, to hold up our hands unremittingly to God, it is yours to

stretch out the sword against the children of Amalek.—So be it." The assembly answered, as to a summons blown by an arch-angel,—"It is the will of God—it is the will of God!" Thousands devoted themselves to the service of God, as they imagined, and to the recovery of Palestine, with its shrines, from the hands of the Turks; and as a mark of being enlisted in the service, began to wear the figure of a cross on the shoulder of their cloak, but of a different colour from that of the garment itself. From this cross, the undertaking was called a *Crusade*, and those who were engaged in it, *Crusaders*. The eagerness with which this holy symbol was adopted, was so great, that some of the princes cut their robes in pieces, in order to furnish crosses for the multitudes around.

The extraordinary proceedings at the Council of Clermont were circulated with such amazing celerity over Europe, as made those be believed who affirmed that the report of this general movement was heard and known among distant nations even on the very evening of the day of council. But, without listening to what is incredible, it is certain that the news of the Crusade was every where spread through the Christian world with unexampled speed, and every where received with the utmost interest and applause. The number of individuals who assumed the Cross, or, in other words, pledged themselves to the Holy War, amounted probably to half a million at least. A very great proportion of this multitude consisted of ignorant

men, unaccustomed to warfare, and unacquainted with the slightest precautions either in the field of battle, or the far more complicated subjects of marches and halts which were to be agreed on, and provisions, which were to be got in readiness. We may form some idea of the classes from which these men were gathered, when we learn, that although the strength of every army at the time consisted in cavalry, this miscellaneous or rabble rout, though composed of many thousand infantry, contained only *eight* horsemen. It is no wonder, says an historian, that a bird having wings so short, with a tail of such disproportioned length, should not take a distant flight. The enthusiasm of these ignorant and rash plebeians was so great, that they accounted the slightest precaution not only unnecessary, but even an actual insult to Heaven, as inferring a doubt that Providence would fail to provide and protect the soldiers who had voluntarily enlisted themselves in this holy cause.

These tumultuary bands, accordingly, did not wait for the great princes and leaders who had engaged in the same expedition, but resolved to set out on the journey by themselves. To insure divine protection, they placed Peter the Hermit himself at the head of one division, and a valiant but needy knight, called Walter the Penny-less (a name sufficiently expressive of his want of means), at the head of the second. The latter set out first, and passing through Bavaria, Austria, Hungary and Bulgaria, reached Constantinople with much less loss and difficulty than might have

A.D. 1096.

been expected from the composition of his force. Peter followed, some weeks afterwards. These leading squadrons were followed in the same year by two others, composed of similar materials, as giddy in their expectations, as wild in their sentiments, and as irregular in their discipline, as the host of the Hermit. Their leaders were, a barbarous and ignorant man called Gotteschalk, a German monk, and Emmicho, a tyrannical Rhine-Graf, or count, who had demesnes on the Lower Rhine. Their followers were chiefly collected in the same countries, which have been found in latter times peculiarly accessible to fits of enthusiasm. Some of them took it into their head, that, in order to expect success over the heathen in Palestine, it might be a good omen to begin with the destruction of the descendants of the Jews, the ancient inhabitants of the Holy Land. They murdered many of these unhappy people, who were the merchants and factors, by whom, in these wild times, the necessary commerce between distant countries was conducted. Their wealth invited the murders and spoliation which their unbelief rendered, in the eyes of the Crusaders, not only venial, but meritorious.

When this tumultuous army had traversed Germany, divided as it were into separate billows of the same advancing ocean, and committing in their progress unheard-of disorders, they at length reached Hungary, then inhabited by the remains of the Huns and Bulgarians. These fierce people, though professing the Christian faith, finding that the military pilgrims spoiled their villages, and seized their

provisions, took arms against them without hesitation, and availing themselves of the swamps and difficult passes of their country, destroyed so many of the Crusaders, that not more than a third of the original host found its way into the Greek territories. Here the Emperor Alexius, though somewhat surprised, doubtless, at the miserable appearance of this vanguard of his Western auxiliaries, relieved their wants, and endeavoured to prevail on them to wait for reinforcements from Europe. But when they had once reached the eastern side of the Bosphorus, to which the policy of Alexius had hastily transported them, their blind and ignorant enthusiasm rejected all further delay, and hurried them on to their own destruction.

They entered Asia Minor, and Soliman, the Sultan of Antioch, decoyed these ignorant warriors into the plains of Nicæa, where they fell beneath the arrows of the light-armed Turks, and by diseases of the climate. In these ill-judged marches and encounters, three hundred thousand champions of the Cross lost their lives, before the kings and nobles of Europe, who had taken the same vows with these over-hasty devotees, had been able to complete their preliminary preparations.

We are to suppose, naturally, that men of high rank, versed at least in the art of war, and in some degree acquainted with politics as they then existed, if foolish enough to be forced into such an undertaking, which indeed the universal enthusiasm rendered it difficult for them to avoid, would not yet neglect the usual precautions to ensure success,

nor expect that provisions, the means of transport, or other absolute necessaries for the success of their expedition, would be furnished by a succession of miracles.

Accordingly, when the storm of destruction had commenced among those disorderly bands, which marched under Peter the Hermit, Gotteschalk, Emmicho, and other incapable persons, there remained behind a well-disciplined host, selected out of the four principal nations of Europe, whose leaders may be briefly mentioned.

I. The French chivalry took the Cross with all the ardour of their national character, and are supposed to have sent as many adventurers as all Europe besides. Philip, their king, immersed in pleasures, and unable to separate himself from his favourite Bertrade, evaded taking the engagement; but his best soldiers followed the steps of his brother Hugo, called the Great, and of Godfrey of Boulogne, Duke of Brabant, who for his wisdom and bravery was afterwards chosen chief of the Crusade. This last distinguished leader was accompanied by his brothers Baldwin and Eustace. Stephen, Earl of Blois, father to that Stephen who was afterwards King of England, Raymond, Earl of Toulouse, Robert, Earl of Flanders, Hugh Earl of Saint Paul, and Baldwin de Burgh, princes of high rank, and warriors of great fame, engaged in this expedition with bands of followers becoming their birth and reputation.

II. Italy sent some distinguished soldiers; among others Bohemund, Prince of Tarentum, with his

nephew Tancred, both worthy descendants of the Norman stock of Guiscard, put to sea at the head of twelve thousand men. The flower of the soldiers of the northern provinces of Italy also took the Cross.

III. England sent many barons, who arrayed themselves under Robert, called Curthose, or Short-hose, the eldest son of William the Conqueror, whom he had succeeded as Duke of Normandy. He also led a great part of the gallant Norman chivalry, to win fame, or meet death, in the eastern deserts. Soldiers from Scotland, Ireland and Wales, are supposed to have joined the English expedition, but in small numbers.

IV. Of Germany we have already spoken, in giving an account of the bands of common men whom she sent to the war. Her noblemen did not take arms in the same proportion, and as the Crusaders marched through that country, it is said they incurred the scorn and ridicule of the more solid part of the nation, who termed them fools for going on so idle an expedition. We shall presently see that the Germans themselves afterwards caught the infection.

Such was the composition of the first Crusade, a formidable armament, the numbers of which are represented as almost incalculable. Its leaders adopted separate roads, for the more easy collecting of forage and provisions, and the respective divisions performed their march with different degrees of security or danger, corresponding to the sagacity or rashness of their generals. Hugo,

brother to the King of France, was defeated and made prisoner on the road by the Bulgarians, and sent captive to Constantinople. The other divisions of the Crusading army arrived safe under the walls of that city.

It was the Greek Emperor's turn to be astonished at the numbers and extent of a host assembled from all nations, and hurrying with frantic eagerness towards the land of Palestine; so that, as Anna Comnena happily expresses it, all Europe seemed loosened from its foundations, and in the act of precipitating itself upon Asia.

Alexius, then the Emperor of Greece, already described as a sagacious prince, had anticipated that the auxiliary forces would extend to no more than a moderate body of men-at-arms, whose valour would make up for the smallness of their numbers, and who for the same reason could not propose to themselves the part of masters instead of allies, or dictate laws to the sovereign whom they had come to assist. Instead of such a moderate reinforcement, the subtle and suspicious Emperor of the East now saw himself begirt by armed legions from every corner of Europe, speaking unknown languages, sheathed in complete armour,—iron men, in short, compared to his effeminate Grecians,—owning no common bond or tie, save that of their insane oath, each knight amidst their numbers holding the most unbounded confidence in his own courage, and the utmost contempt for all opposition which could be offered to his most unreasonable wishes.

The reflections and apprehensions of Alexius

were natural enough; but a generons mind would have subdued them, and rather trusted to the honour of the principal Crusaders, than have undermined their strength by indirect practices, and offended their pride by showing a jealousy of their good faith, and at the same time a fear for their numbers and force. He at first altogether refused to let so great a body of armed men pass into his Asiatic dominions, even to attack his enemies the Turks. Nor did he at length grant the Crusaders a free passage over the Bosphorus, which divides Europe from Asia, until they would consent to take an oath of fealty to him for such territories formerly belonging to the Emperor as they should recover. Godfrey of Boulogne, and the principal leaders of the Crusade, consented at length, much against the grain, to this unpleasant and jealous preliminary, rather than multiply the difficulties of their situation, or make an attack upon a Christian emperor the first warlike action of the Crusade.

It was, however, with infinite difficulty that the numerous and haughty chiefs were induced to take this oath. Robert of Flanders positively refused to undergo the ceremonial, and many others were only bribed into compliance by the large gifts which the Emperor distributed among them.

Even the manner in which the ceremonial was performed, showed the contempt which the Crusaders entertained for the whole pageant. A French count, called Robert of Paris, appeared before the

Emperor to take the oath, along with several others of his own degree. He had no sooner performed the ceremony, than he sat down on the same throne where the Emperor was reposing in state, exclaiming,—"What churl is this who remains sitting, while so many noble knights are standing in his presence?" It may be believed that no officer of the emperor dared to interfere, but Baldwin, brother of Godfrey of Boulogne, took the Count by the hand, and reproving him for his rudeness, obliged him to rise from the place he had taken. The Emperor, preserving his composure, asked the name and quality of the warrior who had taken so great a liberty. "I can but tell you this," answered the Frank, "that in my country there is an ancient church, to which those desirous of proving their valour repair, fully armed for battle, and, having performed their devotions, remain there, to abide the attack of any adventurous knight that may appear to encounter them. At that church, where three roads meet, have I myself abode for a long space: but the man lives not in France who dared to answer my challenge." The Emperor confined his answer to the prudent observation, that if the Count was fond of fighting, he had come to the place where he was sure to get enough of it, and proceeded to instruct the knight, who probably cared but little for his advice, in the particular warfare of the Turks. This story is told by Anna Comnena, daughter of Alexius, who seems to have suffered severely when she saw the august impe-

rial dignity of her father so rudely infringed upon.[1]

After much time wasted, and many promises made and broken on the part of the Emperor, respecting supplies of provisions, wines, and other necessaries for the army, the army of the Crusaders was transported by the Greek shipping to the shores of Asia, and began seriously to enter upon their holy warfare. Nicæa, which was well garrisoned by the Turks, was taken after a siege, and surrendered to the Emperor Alexius, to whom it was a valuable acquisition. Soliman, Sultan of the Turks, more offended than dismayed by the loss he had sustained, assembled a very numerous army, amounting to from 150,000 to 200,000 horsemen. These hung round the vanguard of the Christian host, and exhausted them by constant but desultory attacks. The scorching sun greatly annoyed the northern people, whose complete coats-of-mail rendered the heat more intolerable. The unusual clang and barbarous sounds of the Turkish musical instruments disturbed the horses of the Christians; and in the first general battle between the Crusaders and the infidels, the former ran a great risk of defeat. The desperate exertions of the leaders at length brought the infidels from desultory skirmishes to close action, in which armour of proof, with superior size and strength of body, gave advantage to the Europeans. Bohemund, Count Hugo of France,

[1] [This story is the foundation of the author's last romance, *Count Robert of Paris*.—ED.]

and Robert of Normandy, did wonderful feats with their own hands. The latter slew three infidels of distinction in the face of both armies. The Sultan Soliman fled from the battle, which was fought at Dorylæum, in Phrygia. The restoration of his territory, called Roum, to the Emperor Alexius, as it formed a frontier country of importance, was the means of preserving the Greek empire for perhaps a hundred years longer than it was otherwise likely to have subsisted. But Alexius did not make a politic use of his advantages. Instead of assisting the Christians with good faith and sincerity, he took a more indirect course; he tried to pursue his own interest by holding the balance betwixt the Crusaders and their enemies the Turks, in the vain hope that he could make success turn to the one scale or the other, at his pleasure.

May, 1097.

The siege of the celebrated city of Antioch, accompanied with dearth of provisions, want of water, scorching heat, and contagious diseases, severely tried the patience of the military pilgrims, and wore out that of many. But the Crusaders were particularly scandalized at the defection of Peter the Hermit, who fled from the camp rather than share the severities to which he had been the means of making millions expose themselves. The fugitive was brought back by force, the rather that the absence of this famous preacher and prophet was deemed an evil omen. Antioch was at length betrayed into the hands of the Crusaders by a Christian within the city; but, enraged at the hardships they had sustained, and thirsting for

blood, the besiegers spared, in their rage, neither Christian nor Pagan.

A very large host, chiefly of Persians, under an Emir called Kerboga, in vain advanced to retake the place and avenge the slaughtered Moslemin. Their blockade, indeed, reduced the late besiegers to the state of being themselves besieged. Disease followed famine, men and horses died in multitudes. A well-imagined and happily-timed discovery of a supposed relic of great sanctity, restored the enthusiasm which had sunk under bad fortune and sufferings. The gates of Antioch were thrown open, the Crusaders rushed out in full confidence of victory; and, being seconded by a fancied apparition of Saint George, Saint Theodore, and Saint Maurice, they totally dispersed the army of the besieging general, which is described as almost innumerable. The strong and wealthy city of Antioch was assigned as the seat of a principality, to be adjudged to Bohemund; for Alexius declined to accept what he was conscious he had no force to preserve. The route to Palestine now lay open to the Crusaders—that country for which they had abandoned all their other prospects in life.

Besides the necessity of collecting reinforcements, and the difficulty of coming to a determined conclusion, in cases where so many opinions were to be consulted, the city of Jerusalem, the possession of which was the principal object of the Crusade, had of late changed masters, and returned from the possession of the Turks to that of the Saracens of

Egypt, who were commanded by the Fatemite Califs. The Saracens, it must be remembered, had always afforded safety and protection to the western pilgrims, during the period when they held possession of the Holy City. It was, therefore, with some reason that they endeavoured to persuade the Crusaders to put an end to the war, as being now without a motive. The Egyptian ambassadors represented to the assembled chiefs, that Jerusalem, which the Turks had made the scene of their oppressions, was now restored to its lawful possessors, the Saracens, who had always given, and would engage always to give, hospitable reception, and free access to the objects of their devotion, to all peaceful pilgrims who should desire to approach them in moderate numbers, and without arms. The Calif also offered great and splendid gifts to the chiefs of the Crusade, to induce them to make peace. The European leaders returned for answer, that their vows engaged them to rescue the Holy Land, and its capital, the city of Jerusalem, from infidels, of whatever denomination, whom they should find in possession of it; that they were determined to recover the city accordingly, and would admit of no treaty, whether with Turk or Saracen, or other Mahometan whatsoever, which had not the absolute surrender of Jerusalem for its basis.

A.D. 1099. At length the remains of this mighty Crusade advanced on Palestine, and laid siege to the holy city of Jerusalem, so long the object of their hopes, vows, and wishes. The place

was naturally strong, and defended by thick walls and bulwarks, as well as by rocks and eminences. The Crusaders remaining fit for service, out of a host which numbered its warriors by hundreds of thousands, did not now amount to forty thousand men. Aladdin, lieutenant of the Egyptian Calif, commanded nearly an equal number of defenders. The Christians had, therefore, a difficult task before them, especially as they were in want of water, tents, and military engines. They at first attempted to take the city by main force, and made a general assault on the walls within five days after they sat down before them; but being unprepared for such service, they were beaten off with loss and dishonour. The siege was, however, pressed with vigour; the chiefs endured their losses with firmness, and their experience discovered supplies for their wants. Two wooden turrets, constructed upon wheels, were formed by some Genoese workmen, to be advanced to the wall, for the purpose of commanding the defences. The first of these, under the direction of Raymond, Count of Toulouse, was set on fire, and consumed by the besieged. The second, under the immediate superintendence of Godfrey of Boulogne, was, with better fortune, rolled up to the walls, where, as it overlooked the parapet, the arrows from the archers within it cleared the rampart of the defenders. A drawbridge then dropt between the tower and the wall —the attacking party rushed across it, and the besiegers obtained possession of the city. An indiscriminate massacre commenced, in which many

thousand Mahometans were slain, although resistance was entirely at an end. When this pitiless slaughter (which lasted three days) was over, the victors, with a devotion strangely contrasted with their late cruelty, joined in a solemn procession to the Holy Sepulchre, where loud hymns of praise, and devout tears of penitence, were enthusiastically poured forth as an acceptable offering to Heaven, by the very men whose hands were still red with the blood spilt in an unjustifiable massacre.

The country of Palestine followed the fate of its capital, and the Christian leaders resolved to consummate their victory by erecting a Latin kingdom there, whose rulers should for ever defend the Holy Land, which the valour of the Crusaders had now recovered from the infidels. The crown of Jerusalem was refused by Robert of Normandy and Robert of Flanders, who might both have made pretensions to the sovereignty; the more ambitious Bohemund had already settled himself in Antioch, and Baldwin had, in like manner, established himself at Edessa. To a hero, who, if only the equal of these princes in valour, and their inferior in power, far excelled them in moral qualifications, and in a true sense of religion, the crown was next offered by unanimous consent. This was Godfrey of Boulogne, the foremost in obtaining possession of the city, of which he was now declared king. He would, however, only accept the title of Defender and Baron of the Holy Sepulchre, and from the same spirit of devout modesty, he assumed a crown

of thorns, instead of gold, as the appropriate symbol of his authority.

In about a fortnight, Godfrey was called upon to defend his newly-conquered metropolis against the Calif of Egypt, who was advancing in person to attempt its recapture. They met in the valley of Ascalon, where the Egyptians (inferior to the Turks, whom the Christians had hitherto encountered, in the knowledge and practice of war) received a total defeat. Godfrey having thus established and enlarged his new kingdom, proceeded, with the assistance of the most experienced persons who were present, to adjust a system of laws, called the Assize of Jerusalem, in which the constitution of the Latin kingdom, as it was called, was adapted to the purest feudal principles.

In this manner was established, and thus was regulated, the kingdom of Jerusalem, which endured for about a century after its establishment in the first Crusade, till its destruction by Saladin in 1187. During the short period of its turbulent existence, this state, composed of so many proud and independent barons, who often refused obedience to the king of their own choice, underwent so many civil convulsions, as rendered it peculiarly unfit to defend itself against the Mahometans, who were bent upon recovering a territory which they considered as their own property. Various means were, however, resorted to, in order to maintain and defend this Christian kingdom against their constant attacks.

One was by the erection of two great societies, or communities of knights, who took upon them a vow of celibacy, of poverty, and of obedience to their spiritual superiors, as well as to defend the Temple of Jerusalem against the infidels. These two orders of military monks did great service in the protection of the Holy Land. But when the Templars, as the first of them was called, became wealthy and powerful, it appears their manners became corrupted, and their morals dissolute; they were also accused of meditating enterprises promising advantage to their own order, but threatening danger to lawful Christian monarchs, and to Christianity in general; so that, under allegations partly proved, and partly alleged, the order was suppressed about the year 1312, two hundred years after it had been erected. The other fraternity of the same kind was called the Knights Hospitallers of St John of Jerusalem, whose first vow was the providing hospitality for pilgrims, though, like the Templars, they chiefly devoted themselves to military exploits against the infidels. They did not rise to the eminence of the Templars, nor share in the odium attached to them; accordingly you will see that the Knights of St John, under the title of the Knights of Malta, continued their sworn war against the Mahometans till a late period.

But besides the support of these two warlike fraternities, formed for the preservation of the Holy Land, the same motives which had made the powers of Europe first engage in the original Crusade, led

to their forming similar expeditions from time to time, at distant intervals, by which great armies passed into Asia, for the purpose of delaying the fall of Palestine, or to recover it, when lost, to Christendom. These will fall to be mentioned, more or less minutely, in the course of our story. In the mean time, we may conclude our history of the First Crusade with the death of its hero, Godfrey of Boulogne, whose virtues and talents had succeeded in giving a temporary appearance of strength and consistency to the dominions conquered by his valour. This event took place within a year after the capture of the Holy city, and in the last year of the eleventh century. A.D. 1100.

CHAPTER X.

Dissensions among the three sons of Robert Duke of Normandy—The Kingdom of England and Dukedom of Normandy united in the person of Henry, the youngest—War undertaken by Louis the Fat, in support of the claim of William Clito, nephew of Henry, to Normandy—Defeat of the French—Fortunes of William Clito—his Death—Death of Louis the Fat—Accession of Louis the Young, who undertakes a Crusade, in conjunction with Conrad, Emperor of Germany—they are accompanied by two bands of Females, the German Amazons under a leader called the Golden Footed, and the French under Queen Eleanor—Disasters of the Crusade—Misconduct of Eleanor—Both monarchs abandon the enterprise

[1100.]

WHILE the princes and barons of the first Crusade were establishing in Palestine the little Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, various alterations took place in Europe, by which the rights of the absentees were materially affected. No one suffered more by these than Robert Duke of Normandy. To furnish himself forth for the Crusade, this eldest son of William the Conqueror had imprudently pledged the Duchy of Normandy, being the only part of his father's dominions which had descended to him, to his brother William, called Rufus, or

the Red, King of England, for a large sum of money. But while Robert was employed in cleaving Mahometan champions asunder, and exhibiting feats of the most romantic valour, William was privately engaged in securing and rendering permanent the temporary interest which the mortgage gave him in the fief of the duchy, and it soon became evident, that even if Robert should be able and desirous to redeem the territory, it was not likely that his more powerful brother would renounce the right he had acquired over it. But the death of William Rufus brought into play a third son of the Conqueror. This was Henry, the youngest, whom his brothers, both Robert and William, had treated with considerable severity after their father's death, and refused to grant any appanage becoming his rank. Civil war ensued among the brothers, and on one memorable occasion, Henry was besieged by his two brethren, in the fortress of Mount Saint Michael, and reduced to the greatest extremity for want of water. His distress being communicated to Robert, who was always generous, he instantly sent him a supply. William, who was of a harder and more inflexible disposition, upbraided Robert with his imprudent generosity. "What else could I do?" answered the generous Norman. "He is our brother. Had he died for lack of water, how were we to supply his loss?"

Upon the surrender of the fortress, however, Henry was reduced to the condition of a private individual, although his bravery was equal to that

of either of his brothers; his sagacity was also much superior, and his learning, which was uncommon in those days, so considerable, that he obtained the name of Beauclerc, or Fine Scholar.

A.D. 1100. William Rufus was killed accidentally with an arrow, while hunting in the New Forest, which had been so unscrupulously formed or enlarged, by his father the Conqueror. Henry was engaged in the same sport in a different part of the forest, and learning this accident as soon as it happened, rode post-haste to London, and availed himself of Robert's absence to procure his own election to the crown of England, which was confirmed by Parliament. Robert, whose elder right of inheritance was thus a second time set aside, was at this time in Apulia, where his marriage with a wealthy heiress had supplied him with the means of redeeming his Dukedom of Normandy, of which, in the year following, he took undisturbed possession. He even preferred a title to the crown of England, which was favoured by the Norman barons, the companions of the Conqueror. Henry's chief supporters were the English, who had been cruelly oppressed by the first William, and with less form and reason tyrannized over by the second. Henry, on the contrary, attached the nation to his service and allegiance, by correcting the abuses of his father's and of his brother's administration, and by granting charters, settling the separate interests of the vassals and superiors in the fief, and thus placing both on a legal and equitable footing.

This mitigation of feudal rights was peculiarly agreeable to the English, whose sufferings had been most intolerable, and accordingly secured to Henry the general support of the people. The extension of freedom was at the same time acceptable to the Normans; and Henry began to gain partisans even in his brother's dukedom. But the sudden return of Robert from Apulia recalled to their allegiance the wavering faith of his vassals, and put the prudence of the great Norman barons to a hard alternative; for in the very probable event of war between the brothers, as most of the followers of the Conqueror held land both in England and Normandy, their English or their Norman fiefs must necessarily be exposed to confiscation, according as they should side with Robert or with Henry. It was soon found, also, that Robert was rash and wasteful, while his brother was the wisest prince of his time. A short peace, or truce, did not prevent the brothers from engaging in a war, which was decided by the battle of Tinchebraie, in Normandy, in which Duke Robert was, in spite of the bravery he displayed, defeated A.D. 1106. and made prisoner. He was taken to England and kept in confinement for the rest of his life; but allowed in his captivity all the pleasures of the table, as well as the amusement he could receive from minstrels and jugglers. He was pitied, but not regretted, by the people of his duchy, who thought with the old chronicle, that "he was a prince of the most undaunted courage, and had done many famous things at the sieges of Antioch and Jerusalem; but

his simplicity rendered him unfit for governing, and induced him to listen to light and imprudent counsellors." He died in 1134.

The kingdom of England and the dukedom of Normandy being now united in the person of Henry, as they had been formerly in that of William the Conqueror, the former prince became as great an object of jealousy to the King of France, as his father had formerly been. It was indeed contrary te the nature of feudal dependence, in a correct sense, that the state of vassalage should exist between two princes of equal power, because in such a case, instead of the holder of the fief considering it a benefit, the possession of which formed an indissoluble bond of gratitude between the grantor and the possessor, he was, on the contrary, apt to esteem himself more degraded than enriched by the tenure, and his imagination was eternally at work how he might shake off even his nominal dependence on one whom he probably held his own inferior. There were, therefore, on account of their mutual jealousy, constant bickerings, and several actual wars, between Henry of England, and Louis, who, in his latter years, acquired the surname of the Fat, from his excessive corpulency.

The most formidable war which the latter monarch incited against the King of England, had for its pretext the interests of the youth, William Clito, also called *Longue epée*, or Longsword, from the weapon which he wielded. This was the only son of the captive Robert Duke of Normandy, in whose behalf the King of France not only took arms him-

self, but instigated several of the great vassals of the crown to engage in the same cause. A considerable number of the barons and knights of Normandy were privately enlisted in the design of placing the ducal coronet, which had been his father's, upon the head of a deserving son. Henry passed over to Normandy to defend his rights in that fair duchy against his nephew, and carried with him a gallant army of English, as well as Normans. Both parties divided their forces into small detachments, and employed themselves in ravaging the territories, and taking and burning the castles of their opponents. An accidental rencontre which took place between the two monarchs, each of them at the head of a small band of 400 or 500 men, at Brenneville, deserves notice. 20th Aug. 1119.

Henry was accompanied by two of his sons, and a small number of Norman knights; Louis had with him William Clito and a considerable number of his Norman partisans. Eighty of the French knights commenced the action by a desperate charge, which at first threw the English into disorder, but this was soon retrieved, and the attacking party lost nearly all their horses, and were made prisoners. In this charge William de Crespigny, a gallant knight, attacked King Henry personally, dealing him two strokes with his sword, which, though repelled by the temper of the royal helmet, yet beat the metal flat on his head by main force, and caused the blood to gush from nose and mouth. Henry either received timely succour from a gallant Norman baron

in his ranks, or else struck Crespigny down with his own hand. The life of the brave knight was with difficulty saved. A second charge was not more successful, and the French monarch thought it prudent to save himself by flight. As the combatants were, many of them, friends and neighbours, no great loss was sustained, as out of 900 men engaged in the action, not more than three were slain on both sides, but 140 prisoners were taken. The King of France lost his horse and his standard. Henry ransomed them from the captors, and keeping the banner as an honourable trophy, returned the steed to his royal owner, together with that of William Clito, which had been taken by his son. These courtesies led the way to a peace highly advantageous and honourable to the King of England. A.D. 1120.

Louis of France, at this peace, conceded a point of great consequence to the King of England. Henry had refused to do homage for Normandy, as had been the custom of the successors of Rollo, and of his own father and brother, William the Conqueror, and William Rufus, and as was, indeed, the just right of Louis to demand. Such rendering of homage, said the King of England, was unworthy of a royal person. Louis plainly saw where this pointed, and that it was the object of Henry to shake himself entirely free of his feudal obedience; and this consciousness had made him more anxious to support the claims of William Clito, or Longsword. But now, finding the events of war turn against him, Louis reluctantly

consented that William, the only son of Henry, should be invested with the fief of Normandy, and do homage for that fief, although aware, doubtless, that by this transaction Henry would retain in his own hands all the power and wealth of the duchy, while he would escape the oaths and obligations of the vassal, by the interposition of his son in this character.

But the sudden turns of fate disturb the wisest plans of human policy. The young prince William of England perished at sea; with him died the project of an intermediate vassal in the fief of Normandy; and so the plan of accommodation fell to the ground. The King of France, tempted by the desolate situation of Henry, who was now left without a male-heir, renewed his intrigues with William Clito. He negotiated a marriage between this young prince and a daughter of the Count of Anjou, with whom he was to receive in dowry the county of Maine. With the prospect of being established thus in a powerful seigniory near the frontiers of Normandy, to which his birth gave him so strong a title, William Clito found it easy to form once more a great confederacy against Henry, among the nobles of that dukedom. The King of England's usual prudence, mixed with a shade of that good fortune which prudence alone can render availing, gave Henry again the ascendence over his enemies. He obtained a complete and easy victory over the insurgent nobility, of whom some were made captives, and treated with rigour. Luke de Barré. a

A.D. 1124.

Norman knight of some talent, was an instance of this severity. He had been formerly made prisoner by Henry, and generously dismissed. Notwithstanding this lenity, he not only rebelled a second time against his sovereign, but composed satirical ballads in ridicule of him, which he had recited or sung in public. Such affronts excite more bitter resentment than real injuries. The unlucky poet, having fallen a second time into the hands of the irritated monarch, was condemned to lose his eyes. But he struggled so hard with the executioners who came to put the sentence into execution, that he dashed out his brains against the walls of his dungeon, and thus perished. Two other insurgent nobles sustained the same doom of having their eyes put out, and others were imprisoned.

Triumphant in Normandy, Henry now sought revenge on the King of France, and used for this purpose the assistance of Henry V., Emperor of Germany, to whom Matilda, the English monarch's only remaining child, had been for some years married. The Emperor retained resentment against Louis, because he had permitted a bull, or writing, by which the Pope excommunicated the Emperor, to be published in his archi-episcopal city of Rheims. He assembled an army from the German states, and threatened to enter France, and burn Rheims, where he had sustained such an affront. But the invasion of France by a German army was not viewed with indifference by the great vassals of the former country. Even the barons who had private quarrels with their monarch Louis, or pri-

vate confederacies with Henry of England, acted as obedient vassals of France upon this occasion, and Louis found no difficulty in assembling on this emergency an army of two hundred thousand men. To give them additional ardour in this great national conflict, we hear, for the first time, in this war, of the Oriflamme, or Great Standard of France, being displayed. This was a flag of crimson, attached to a gilded lance, from which it drew its name, which implies a golden flame. The Emperor Henry, unprepared to encounter such an army, retired before the Oriflamme, and the immense body of men assembled around it. Louis would then willingly have employed this gallant host in driving the King of England out of Normandy, and settling William Clito in that province. But the great vassals of France, of whose retainers the principal part of the army consisted, refused to serve in a quarrel which they rather accounted personal to the King, than essential to the kingdom; and were alarmed, moreover, lest the weight which success might give the crown in such an enterprise, might cause it to become too powerful for the privileges of the vassals, of which they were strictly tenacious.

The Emperor Henry V. died soon after this war, and Henry of England recalled to his own court the widowed Empress Matilda, his daughter, and formed the bold plan of appointing her the heir of his dominions, as the sole successor of his blood. This was an attempt of a novel and hardy kind, for the genius of the times A.D. 1125.

was averse to female succession. It was with them a maxim, that, as it was only the male heir who could do battle or give counsel, so it was only he who could render service for the fief either in war, or in the courts of the superior where the vassals assembled. This feudal rule seemed to exclude the Empress Matilda from succeeding her father in the duchy of Normandy, and in England the settlement of the crown on a female was a thing as yet unheard of. Henry, however, by the high interest which he possessed among the English clergy and barons, induced the parliament of that country, after long deliberation, to agree that his daughter should succeed to the crown at his death.

In Normandy, the prospect of Matilda's succession was rendered yet more precarious than in England, by the opposing claims of William Clito, to whose father, Duke Robert, the fief had lawfully belonged. Indeed, the fate of this high-spirited and high-born prince was checkered with strange alternations of fortune, which promised frequently to elevate him to the utmost height of his wishes, and as often disappointed his expectations. Thus, at one time, Henry's influence with the Pope procured a prohibition of his marriage with Sybilla, daughter of the Count of Anjou, on the ground of too near affinity, and thus deprived him of the earldom of Maine. To make amends to him for this disappointment, the King of France, partly with a view to traverse the measures of his antagonist, King Henry, partly out of a generous compassion for a prince of such exalted birth

and distinguished merit, whom fortune had defrauded of his birthright, procured him a marriage equally advantageous with that which the Pope had forbidden. The second wife of William Clito was a sister of the Queen of France, whose dowry was the province called the Vexin, with three adjacent towns. Shortly afterwards the young prince succeeded to the rich and important earldom of Flanders, on A.D. 1127. the murder of Charles, called the Good, who was killed while hearing mass, and even in the act of prostration, by some of his own rebellious subjects. The King of France hurried to Bruges, where the deed had been committed, and having taken the murderers after a long siege, caused them to be precipitated from the ramparts. He then conferred the earldom of Flanders upon William Clito, whom he had so long relieved and protected, thereby raising him to a more hopeful state, with respect to dominion and revenue, than he had ever yet attained. The new Earl of Flanders seems to have had a good right by blood to be the head of this important province, being a great-grandson of Baldwin VII.

Henry, alarmed by seeing his nephew thus in possession of the wealthy and powerful earldom of Flanders, began to bethink himself by what means he might best strengthen the title of his daughter to Normandy, which, in case of his own decease, must needs experience risk and opposition from the power of William Clito. For this purpose, he resolved to accomplish a marriage betwixt Matilda

and Geoffrey, the heir of Fulk, Earl of Anjou. This House of Anjou had obtained the family title of Plantagenet, because the above-mentioned Fulk, while fighting in the Crusades at the head of a hundred knights, whom he maintained in that holy warfare, had, in sign of humility, worn in his helmet a sprig of broom (in Latin, *humilis genista*), which circumstance somewhat inconsistently gave a name to one of the haughtiest families that ever wore a crown, and became the successors to that of England. Fulk, the reigning Earl of Anjou, received, at the time of his son's marriage with Matilda, an invitation to succeed Baldwin II. in the precarious dignity of King of Jerusalem. His sense of religion, and love of fame, were so strong as to induce him to renounce the wealth and safety of the earldom of Anjou, for the dangers and difficulties of the crown of thorns. He surrendered to his son Geoffrey the possession of his ample dominions of Anjou, Touraine, and Maine; and having seen him united with the Empress Matilda, departed for the Holy Land.

Henry I., fortified by so strong an alliance, conceived himself now able to find his nephew William Clito occupation in his new earldom, so as to prevent his resuming his pretensions to Normandy. He therefore stirred up a German prince, Theodoric, Landgrave of Alsace, to prefer a claim to the earldom of Flanders, and to support it with arms. William Clito defended himself with equal skill and courage. A plot being formed to murder him, it was betrayed by a young woman with whom

he had an intrigue. The girl was engaged in washing her lover's head, when, by sighs and tears which escaped from her involuntarily, he conceived an alarm of his danger. Having extorted from the young woman the cause of her distress, he immediately provided for her safety by sending her to the charge of the Duke of Aquitaine, his brother-at-arms. With the same alacrity he armed himself, without even waiting to comb his hair, and attacked the conspirators so suddenly as to force them to take shelter in the castle of Alost, where he besieged them. The Landgrave, his competitor, advancing to raise the siege, when the garrison was reduced to extremity, engaged in an action with Longsword's forces, in which he was at first successful. But William Clito, in person, charged at the head of a body of reserved troops, and defeated his German opponent. With the same alacrity the spirited prince returned to the gates of Alost, where a party of the besieged were in the act of sallying forth to the assistance of the Landgrave. They were instantly charged and driven back. But in this slight rencontre, as the gallant young earl endeavoured to parry the thrust of a pike made by a private soldier, he received a wound in the fleshy part of his hand between the forefinger and thumb. The appearance of the hurt was trifling, but his arm swelled, and the wound turned to a gangrene, of which he died in the space of five days. He was a prince A.D. 1128. resembling his father, Robert Curthose, in bravery and warlike fame, resembling him also in the con-

tinued evil fortune which pursued him; but unlike his father in that respect, we cannot find that his misfortunes had any source in his own rashness, carelessness, or misconduct. It is said, that the aged and blind Duke Robert, still a miserable prisoner in England, started from his bed in a dream, in which a soldier appeared to him who, wounding his arm with a pike, exclaimed that his son was slain. William Clito was much regretted by the King of France, whose faithful adherent he had been ever since he began to distinguish himself in the world; this firm union, as well as Clito's pretensions to Normandy, having afforded the readiest means of embarrassing Louis's formidable rival, King Henry.

Amidst ceaseless though petty wars, and constant though fluctuating negotiations, Louis VI. became aged, and his corpulence, which constantly increased, affected his activity both of body and mind. He endeavoured, according to the custom of the house of Capet, to supply his own deficiencies, by associating with him on the throne his eldest son Philip, a youth of great hopes. But his father did not long enjoy his assistance in the affairs of government, grown too weighty for his own management. Riding in the streets of Paris, not many months after his coronation, the strange accident of a black pig running between his horse's feet occasioned the young king a severe fall, the consequences of which he did not survive many days. The clergy pretended, as usual, to see in the singular death of this prince a

A.D. 1129.

judgment of God upon his father for refusing some requests of the prelates; and in particular, for declining to grant the royal pardon, and to restore the effects to one of their number who had been guilty of treason.

Deprived of his eldest son, the King raised to the throne in his stead his second son, Louis le Jeune, so called to distinguish him from his father. A.D. 1131. This Prince was crowned at Rheims by Pope Innocent himself, who had at that time retired into France, to seek refuge from the resentment of the emperor, with whom he had many quarrels. Two years afterwards, the old king, finding his health continue to decline, surrendered his power altogether to his son. As he delivered his signet to him for this purpose, he used these just and excellent words: "Take this symbol of sovereign power; but never forget that it is only a public trust, for the exercise of which you will hereafter be called to the most strict account before the King of kings." After this virtual resignation, he never again assumed the ornaments or pomp of royalty. Yet he lived to witness an event in his family, of the deepest interest. This was the marriage of his son Louis with Eleanor, daughter of William X. Duke of Guienne and Aquitaine. This nobleman having died while engaged in a pilgrimage to the shrine of St James of Compostella, his daughter succeeded to his extensive territories. On her marriage with Louis VII., she was crowned Queen of France. A.D. 1137. Shortly afterwards, Louis the Fat died, his con-

stitution yielding, it is said, to the extreme heat of the season.

The reign of Louis the Young, who was only eighteen years old at his father's death, commenced, as was generally the case in the French monarchy, with violent commotions among the nobility and great vassals of the crown. Having been unwillingly subjected to the authority of a prince like Louis VI., who, notwithstanding his corpulent habit of body, was perpetually in action, and at the head of his troops, these dignitaries thought the minority of a young prince a favourable time to recover a part of their exorbitant power. Thiebault, Earl of Champagne, one of the most artful intriguers and turbulent agitators of the period, engaged himself in forming conspiracies among the nobility, for abridging the privileges, and diminishing the authority of the crown. Provoked by the sinister intrigues of this factious nobleman, whose power was increased by his brother, Stephen of Mortagne, having usurped the throne of England, from Matilda, daughter of Henry I., the King ravaged his county of Champagne with imprudent and unrelenting severity. The town of Vitry was taken by assault; and the cathedral, containing thirteen hundred persons, who had fled thither as to an inviolable sanctuary, was delivered to the flames, with all who were within it.

A.D. 1143.

Louis was of a fiery, yet of a religious disposition. The cruel deed was scarcely done ere it was repented of; and, besides the massacre and conflagration of Vitry, Louis conceived that he had other

sins to be penitent for. The conviction that he had committed a great and most inhuman crime was mingled with the reflection that he had offended the Pope, by refusing to receive, as Archbishop of Bourges, a priest called Pierre de la Châtre, chosen to that office by the chapter of the see, without the royal license. The consciousness of these two offences, one of a deep dye, and the other founded in the superstitious prejudices of the age, distracted the mind of the young Prince. He laid the state of his conscience before Bernard, Abbot of Clairvaux (afterwards canonized as Saint Bernard), a divine of strict morals, venerated for his good sense, learning, and probity, and incapable of substituting evil counsel for good, as far as his own comprehension of good and evil reached, but who, from the excess of his zeal, and devotion to the service of the church, was sufficiently apt to be misled by the prejudices and passions of his order. This churchman, availing himself of the remorse which agitated the King's breast, both on account of his cruel action at Vitry, and his disobedience to the Papal See, took the opportunity to press upon the afflicted mind of Louis, that the best and most effectual atonement for his misdeeds, would be to undertake a crusade to the Holy Land, with a force strong enough to restore the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem, now pressed on every side by the numerous nations of infidels amongst whom it held its precarious existence. Upon the earnest exhortations of St Bernard, who pledged his word for the fortunate issue of the expedition, Louis le

Jeune was induced to assume the cross, and determine on an expedition to the relief of the Holy Land, with the whole strength of his kingdom.

A.D. 1145. At a great parliament, or assembly of the representatives of the French nation, which was, on account of the numbers who attended, held in the open air, at Vezelay, in the county of Nevers, Louis took from the hands of Bernard, a cross, which had been consecrated at Rome for his particular use. The Counts of Toulouse, of Flanders, of Nevers, of Ponthieu, and many others of the great vassals, followed the example of their sovereign. The gentry and nobility took arms in emulation of each other; and those who assumed the cross, sent a distaff and scissars to such as chose the wiser part of remaining at home, as if to upbraid them with cowardice and effeminacy.

The same spirit spread to the court of Conrad III., Emperor of Germany, where the martial spirit of the people favouring the zeal with which the clergy preached the Crusade, that prince assembled an army of at least fifty thousand men-at-arms, without taking account of infantry and light cavalry. Among these was a band of women, armed like Amazons, riding in the fashion of men, and armed in like manner. The female who led this band acquired, from her gilded spurs, and rich buskins, the title of the *golden-footed.* Although the formation of a band so composed might show the unbounded zeal of the nations that furnished the Crusaders, it could not add to the force, and still less improve the discipline, of the army. It

was, indeed, the curse of these religious expeditions, that although a large proportion of the persons engaged in them were actuated by feelings of real devotion, a much larger consisted of men of debauched and infamous habits, who looked for little besides the pleasure of practising, with impunity, the grossest vices, amidst the profligacy of an ill-regulated camp.

In the French host, the part of the golden-footed lady was performed by no less a personage than the Queen herself. She had an ample inheritance in her own right, as the heiress of her father, the Duke of Aquitaine, which, adding to the arrogance of a character naturally intractable, induced her to take a personal share in this expedition, though her presence and behaviour seem to have acquired little credit either to her husband or herself.

The Queen of France was attended by a large band of the youth of both sexes. Some gallant damsels were mounted on horseback, in masculine fashion, like the German Amazons, while a chosen band of the gayest and most noble youths of France assumed the title of Queen Eleanor's Guard. It may be easily supposed that pilgrims, of such an age and such manners, were more likely to promote the gaiety than the discipline of this pious undertaking. The expedition, however, excited the highest hopes throughout Christendom, which were doomed to meet with a woful reverse.

Louis left the government of his dominions during his absence to a regency, composed of his relative and favourite, the Earl of Vermandois, the

Archbishop of Rheims, and Suger, Abbot of St Denis. The latter, though a churchman, entertained much more elevated political views than those of the Abbot of Clairvaux, and had used every effort to dissuade the King from embarking in this doubtful expedition.

The Crusade now began to set forward. The Germans with the Emperor at their head were the first who advanced into Greece, and they were received by the reigning Emperor, Manuel Comnenus, with not less apparent goodwill, and still more secret and active hostility, than his predecessor Alexius had displayed against the first Crusade. This treacherous Prince assigned the strangers false guides, by whom they were induced to take up their quarters on the banks of the unwholesome Melas, a river which consists only of mud during summer, and forms a sea in the course of winter. Here the natural progress of disease, caused by swamps and unhealthy exhalations, was augmented by bad provisions, such as meal adulterated with lime, supplied to them by their treacherous allies. False and worthless coinage was also circulated amongst them, and no secret artifice spared, by which the formidable numbers of these simple devotees might be diminished and wasted. This usage of the Emperor of Greece was the more atrocious, that he was connected with Conrad (whose forces he thus undermined and destroyed), in the character of a relative, as well as ally, as they had married two sisters. The facts are, however, proved against the treacherous

A.D. 1147.

Greek by the evidence of Nicetas, a contemporary historian of his own language and country. It would seem as if, by aiding in the destruction of these large armies of Crusaders, the Greek Emperor hoped and expected to hold the balance betwixt them and the Saracens, and thus attain the superiority over both the powers whom he feared. It is even certain that Manuel Comnenus entertained a secret, but close alliance with the Saracens, and that he transmitted to them intelligence of the motions of their enemy.

The host of France, which, under its young and valiant monarch, had safely reached Constantinople, and by precaution or good fortune, escaped most of the snares and dangers which had been spread for the Germans by the treacherous Greeks, crossed the Bosphorus and reached Nicæa. In the mean time, Conrad's army, which preceded it, with a view to proceed to Antioch, had, by trusting to false or ignorant guides, involved itself in an unknown and difficult country, and was suddenly set upon by the Turks, who occasioned them immense loss. The strength of their army was still farther reduced by the incessant attacks of the light Turkish cavalry, who were perfectly acquainted with the country, and accustomed to endure the heat of the climate, under which the Germans sank by whole squadrons at a time. Nothing at last was left for them but a precipitate retreat, and when the fugitives who reached Nicæa in safety were numbered, it was found that they did not form a tenth part of the force which had left it only a few

weeks before, in all the confidence of victory. This result was far from encouraging to the French army, which was yet comparatively unbroken. Conrad and Louis embraced with tears of sorrow, and remained for some time unable to give vent to their feelings. They agreed to unite their forces, and to proceed in company towards Palestine. But as the German troops were so much reduced, that it no longer became the dignity of the Emperor to remain at their head, Louis placed the troops of Lorraine and Arles under his command. In this order they marched on to Ephesus, where Conrad, suffering under two severe wounds, took the resolution of returning to Constantinople, where he was more kindly received by Manuel in his misfortunes, than he had been when in his prosperity.

After reposing some time at Ephesus, the French army now proceeded on its march, but in a few days its farther progress was opposed by a serious obstacle. A large army of Turks lay on the opposite bank of the Mæander, prepared to dispute the passage, while another was immediately in their rear. At that point the river was not considered fordable, nor was there bridge, shipping, or other mode of crossing it. At the command of the King, however, the vanguard of the French plunged gallantly into the stream, and fortunately, finding it shallower than had been reported, half-swimming, half-dragging each other forward, they reached the opposite bank, when the Turks, too much astonished for resistance, immediately took to flight. Yet, in the future progress of the French, wherever the

advantage of ground was on their opponents' side, the light-armed archers of the Turkish army worsted the Christians in many a bold skirmish; so that, notwithstanding their original numbers, the Crusaders suffered extremely ere they made any effectual progress in Asia Minor. Indeed, the victory on the Mæander was the beginning, and wellnigh the end, of the success of the Christians.

The Saracens and the Turks had now become accustomed to the warfare of the Latins in the Holy Land, understood their mode of fighting better than in the days of Godfrey of Boulogne, and shunned all encounters with those iron warriors of the west and north, while they fatigued their unwieldy strength by ambuscades, alarms, skirmishes, and all the vexatious harassing of light-armed troops. On this score, the advantage was entirely on the side of the Mahometans, for the soldiers of the second Crusade were as heavily armed and showed as little acquaintance with the Eastern mode of skirmishing as their predecessors of the first. The Turks, on the other hand, took advantage of every mistake, and on one occasion nearly destroyed Louis and his whole army.

The French, marching in two divisions, in order to cross a ridge of mountains near Laodicea, Louis, who conducted the rear-guard in person, directed Geoffrey de Rançon, who led the van, to halt on the summit of the chain of hills, and abide there till the second division came up. But that officer was tempted by the supposed absence of the enemy, and the fertility of the plain beneath, to

march down, leaving the summit of the ridge undefended, thereby giving the Turks, who were on the alert, an opportunity of occupying the passes in great force.

Louis, therefore, when he had reached with the rear-guard the summit of the mountain, where he expected to rejoin the vanguard of his army, found himself involved in a numerous ambuscade of the infidels, who attacked him suddenly, with those dreadful yells with which it is their custom to begin battle. The Christians, taken by surprise, were thrown into disorder, especially as the broken and craggy ground was totally unfit for the action of heavy-armed cavalry, which formed the strength of their army. The unfortunate Louis displayed great personal courage, and rallied his forces by his own example. His exertions were at first in vain; for, though he forced his way to the very summit of the hill, he was soon left almost alone, surrounded by the enemy, many of his bravest knights being slain at his feet. In this emergency, finding himself at the foot of a rock, Louis climbed up a tree, which grew slanting out of the face of the precipice. The Turks discharged their arrows against him in vain; his armour of proof kept him safe, while he defended himself with his sword from the more close attack of such as attempted to climb into his place of refuge, lopping off their hands and heads with little difficulty. The night becoming darker, he was at length left alone. In the morning he was extricated from his perilous situation by the countermarch of a part of his van-

guard. But he lost in this unfortunate encounter nearly twenty thousand men, in killed, wounded, and prisoners, being more than the half of his army.

The day following this disastrous action, Louis proceeded to Attalia (the capital city of Pamphylia), amidst constant skirmishes and great hardships. The natives, who were Christians, though tributary to the Turks, dared neither oppose nor assist the invaders. In order to rid themselves of the Crusaders, they offered to convey them to Antioch by sea. At Attalia, therefore, the King and his principal nobles and knights took shipping, and set sail for the principality of Antioch, which Bohemund had founded at the time of the first Crusade, but which was now ruled by Raymond de Poitiers, a French prince, who received the King with demonstrations of the utmost respect and kindness. Louis, however, regarded his attentions and civility with distrust, conceiving it to be Raymond's secret object to obtain the assistance of the French troops in protecting and enlarging his own territory of Antioch, and for that purpose to interrupt their journey to Palestine.

While the choicest part of the French army which accompanied Louis himself had reached Antioch, the infantry who were left behind at Attalia, made repeated attempts to rejoin their monarch, both by land and sea. They were successful by neither mode of passage; and so unfortunate was their last march, so humbled the pride and resolution of the soldiers of the Cross, that three or four

thousand of their number not only surrendered to the infidels, but embraced the Mahometan faith, and fought against the cause they had left their country to defend. The few remnants of this part of the army which reached Antioch, came as stragglers, unfit for military service.

Mean time, besides the grief and mortification attending these losses and misfortunes, the mind of Louis was harassed by domestic anxiety of the most painful kind. The conduct of his Queen, who, as we have noticed, accompanied the Crusade, became such as to give great displeasure to her husband. They had, as we have already mentioned, been kindly received in the city of Antioch, of which Raymond de Poitiers was the sovereign. This Prince was an uncle of the Queen, and one of the handsomest and most accomplished men of his time. He did his utmost to make himself agreeable to his royal guests, and the French authors say, that, with the Queen at least, he succeeded too well. But as he was fifty years of age, and a married man, it is equally possible that the jealousy of Louis le Jeune may have imagined grounds of suspicion which had no real existence. Nevertheless, the King left Antioch, and retreated to his own army, bearing his Queen along with him, under such circumstances of haste and concealment, as argued much doubt of the loyalty of his host. Other historians say, that Louis entertained well-grounded jealousies of a Turk, whom they call Saladin, a man of low rank, a minstrel, and a juggler. It is at least certain that the King was jea-

lous; and that the Queen, presumptuous and arrogant, was little disposed, in her pride as a great heiress, to submit herself to his humour. Great animosity arose between them, and Eleanor began to desire a separation, for which she founded a plausible reason upon their relationship to each other, being within the prohibited degrees, a pretext which the Catholic Church on many occasions sanctioned as a legitimate ground of divorce, when the real cause was something very different. Louis, a devout and bigoted prince, probably sincerely entertained the conscientious scruples which Eleanor seems only to have affected.

The bad effects of these dissensions were for sometime suspended, by the condition in which the royal pair were placed. The King of France had still around him the flower of his nobles and army, who had come with him by sea from Attalia, while the wretched residue was left to perish under the walls of that city, or in the adjacent deserts. The assistance of Raymond had enabled Louis to remount his chivalry, and he was desirous, even at this late hour, to do something which should make memorable his expedition to Palestine.

After having completed his pilgrimage to Jerusalem, the French monarch repaired to St Jean d'Acre, to attend an assembly of the Christian princes engaged in the Crusade, and determine their future operations. The Emperor Conrad was also once more among them. It was here resolved, with the assistance of the Christians of Palestine, and the Templars and Hospitallers, to make

an attempt to gain possession of Damascus, an object very far inferior to the grand schemes which inspired the Crusaders at the outset; yet still a matter of consequence, and one which, even in his reduced state, was not beyond the power of Louis to achieve. The siege of that place accordingly commenced, but either by misconduct or treason, the Christians were induced to abandon the attack which they had commenced on the weaker side of the city, and to remove their army to another quarter, where it was opposed to walls of greater strength, and where it was much more difficult to supply the besiegers with provisions. In short, the strength of the Crusaders was wasted and misapplied; success became impossible, and the siege was obliged to be raised, with great loss of honour and reputation.

May, 1148.

Repeated disasters and disappointments had now subdued the hopes of even the most sanguine; and all prepared to abandon an enterprise, to which, though undertaken in the name and cause of religion, Providence seemed to have given so little encouragement.

The Emperor Conrad and the remnant of his Germans first withdrew from the scene, and reached their own country without farther disaster. Next, the French nobles began to steal back, as it were, one by one, from the ill-omened enterprise. King Louis alone seemed yet to nourish the lingering hope, that he might cover his retreat with some action of credit, and it was not till he was alarmed with tidings of commotions in France, that

he resolved to abandon Palestine, where he had been unable to acquire even a single hamlet or one foot of land. Upon this pressing summons, Louis returned to his kingdom with the wretched remnant of his army, having his domestic relations embittered by the most dishonourable suspicions, both sources of distress flowing out of the same frenzy which dictated his celebrated crusade. Yet, such was the infatuation with which the mind of Louis clung to that extravagant undertaking, that, when passing through Rome on his return from the Holy Land, he was earnest with the Pope to authorize St Bernard of Clairvaux to preach a new crusade, which he offered to join in person with a large army, and thus to renew the hazards of an expedition in which he had suffered such loss of men and of reputation. A.D. 1149.

CHAPTER XI.

Divorce of Louis and his Queen, Eleanor—Marriage of Eleanor and Henry Plantagenet, by which her possessions are added to those of a powerful Rival of Louis—Intrigues of Louis to weaken the Power of Henry—Accession of Henry to the English Throne—Contract of Marriage between the Son of Henry and Daughter of Louis—Rupture between these monarchs on Henry's asserting a right to the Earldom of Toulouse—their Reconciliation—Schism concerning the Election of the Pope, in which the Kings of France and England espoused the side of Alexander III.—Odium incurred by Henry on account of the murder of Thomas à Becket—League, with Louis at its Head, against Henry—the Confederates compelled to retreat—Peace concluded—Death of Louis.

[1149—1180.]

THE excellent administration of Suger, the Abbot of St Denis, had maintained the affairs of Louis le Jeune in a reasonably good condition at home, notwithstanding the absence of the King, with the great portion of his forces, which he had so imprudently led to the distant wars of Palestine. But when the news arrived that the whole, or almost the whole, of that huge army had perished, without a single feat of any kind which could add honour to their nation, excepting the single action of the Mæander, the general voice of the nation ac-

cused the King of incapacity; and it was suggested, amid the burst of universal discontent, that. like some of his predecessors, the reigning monarch should be dethroned, and committed to a cloister. The Comte de Dreux, brother of King Louis, who had returned from the Holy Land a short time before him, had greatly contributed to the increase of the national displeasure, by intrigues which had for their object his brother's deposition; and it was the rumour of such practices which recalled Louis from Syria, after a protracted stay in that country. These dissensions between the royal brothers were with some difficulty composed, so soon as the return of Louis had rendered the Comte de Dreux's plans desperate. But there remained the rooted quarrel between the King and his haughty wife, Queen Eleanor, which now began to assume the appearance of a total rupture. Without supposing, with the French historians, that Louis had actual grounds for his jealousy, it is certain he was an object of personal dislike to his wife, who declared that his rigid morals and ascetic devotion were those of a monk, not of a cavalier, and expressed for him an aversion mingled with contempt, which, on his part, was calculated to excite a strong suspicion that she entertained a preference for another. Louis seems also to have shared in the scruples which Eleanor only affected, respecting their too near relationship, and both the royal consorts began to consider the dissolution of their marriage as desirable on many accounts.

The sagacious Abbot of St Denis foresaw, that in gratifying his own and Eleanor's mutual dislike, by consenting to a separation, Louis must inevitably subject himself to the necessity of restoring the ample dominions of Aquitaine, which the princess had inherited from her father; and the far-sighted minister might also reasonably fear, that, once at liberty, she might confer them, along with her hand, on some one whose possession of so fair a portion of the territory of France might prove dangerous to the sovereign. For these reasons, Suger bent the whole of his political genius to accommodate matters between Louis and the Queen, and although he was unable to accomplish the desired reconciliation, he found means to prevail on them to live together on decent terms, until death deprived Louis of his services.

A.D. 1152.

Soon after this event, the royal pair openly declared themselves desirous of a separation. In the motives alleged on the King's side, nothing was said of the reports against Eleanor's character. But in secret Louis justified his conduct to those who censured him for parting with his wife, along with the unavoidable necessity of restoring the duchy of Aquitaine, by alleging the irregularity of her life, and the dishonour of being connected with her. A council of the French national church held at Baugencé, having taken cognizance of the scruples of conscience entertained, or affected, by the royal pair, and having considered their nearness of blood, declared their marriage unlawful, though

it had already subsisted more than sixteen years, and although two daughters, who had been the fruit of the union, were by the sentence rendered illegitimate. The decree of the Council of Baugencé was confirmed by the Pope; and the marriage between Louis and Eleanor was accordingly formally annulled. Louis had now ample time to remark, and perhaps to regret, the consequences of his imprudence.

Eleanor was reinvested as heiress to her father in Guienne, Gascony, Poitou, and other extensive territories belonging to the duchy of Aquitaine. Nevertheless, though having once more the power of bestowing an ample property with her hand, Louis flattered himself that her behaviour had been so scandalous, that there was not a gentleman in the kingdom so poor in fortune and spirit as to take her to wife, though sure thereby to become Duke of Aquitaine. He was much deceived; for his late consort had, even before her divorce was concluded, secured for herself a second match, a prince rich, not only in present possessions, and yet more so in future expectations; and, what must have been peculiarly gratifying to Eleanor's vindictive temper, one, the increase of whose strength was, in fact, the diminution of that of Louis, to whom the object of her second choice was, by birth, a natural opponent. In a word, her second husband was no other than Henry Plantagenet, eldest son of Matilda, sole surviving child of Henry I., King of England, and heir to his mother's pretensions to his grandfather's kingdom.

You cannot have forgotten that Henry I. had de-

clared Matilda, the widow of the Emperor Henry V. of Germany, the heiress of his kingdom, and strengthened her right, by choosing for her second husband Geoffrey Plantagenet, Count of Anjou. But the object of Henry I. was for some time thwarted by the ambition of Stephen, Earl of Mortagne, who forcibly set aside the rights of Matilda and her son, and intruded himself into the throne, where, for a period of sixteen years, he supported himself by his own bravery, and the swords of a great body of the English barons, to whom the confusion of a civil war was more profitable than the good order and strict government of a lawful monarch and a profound peace. In 1146, A.D. 1146. the fortune of war had passed so much to Stephen's side, that the Empress Matilda, with her son Henry, who, though a mere youth, began to show strong symptoms of the wisdom and courage which afterwards distinguished him, were compelled to retreat to Normandy, which Geoffrey, the husband of Matilda, and father of Henry, then ruled as duke, in right of his wife. Upon the proposal of the Earl of Anjou, that his wife and he should cede their right in Normandy to their son, the King of France was prevailed upon to admit young Henry as vassal into the duchy of Normandy, on consideration of his surrendering a frontier district of that province, called the Vexin, which Louis considered as a cession of such importance, that, by way of acknowledgement, he aided Henry with a A.D. 1150. body of troops for putting him into possession of the rest of the fief.

Louis had hardly received Henry Plantagenet as a new vassal in the duchy of Normandy, when he had a quarrel with Geoffrey, Earl of Anjou, that prince's father; and repenting what he had done in Henry's behalf, he invited to Normandy, Eustace, son of King Stephen, promising to assist him in possessing himself of that same duchy, although he had so lately granted the investiture to Henry. The prudent advice of Suger, who then still lived, brought about an accommodation of these perplexed affairs. A suspension of arms was agreed to; young Eustace was sent back to England, highly incensed at the usage he received from Louis; and Henry's right to Normandy was once more fully recognised.

Presently after this accommodation, Geoffrey, Earl of Anjou, died. To Henry he left his earldoms of Anjou, Touraine, and Maine, under the condition, that if he succeeded to the throne of England, he should transfer the French dominions of Anjou to his younger brother Geoffrey. A.D. 1151.

Thus, at the period of the divorce of Louis, when Eleanor cast her eyes upon Henry Plantagenet to be her second husband, he was in actual possession, Duke of Normandy, Earl of Anjou, Maine, and Touraine, and therefore no unfit mate for the heiress of Aquitaine. Their united dominions would render Henry a much more powerful sovereign than her first husband. In addition to this, the brilliant prospect of the crown of England, to which Henry had so just a claim, supported by a strong

party of friends in that kingdom, had no slight share in recommending her second choice to the ambitious Eleanor. In other respects, there was some inequality. The bridegroom was only twenty years of age; the bride had attained the riper period of thirty, and upwards. But, in the case of so wealthy an heiress, Henry did not let his taste for youth interfere with his sense of interest. As to the scandals propagated concerning Eleanor at the French court, Henry treated, or affected to treat, them with an indifference and contempt, which perhaps they justly deserved.

By her union with Henry, Eleanor conferred on him the two duchies of Guienne and Gascony, with the earldom of Poitou, and their extensive
A.D. 1152. dependences. Her own subjects highly approved the choice of their duchess, for the character of Henry, both for courage and prudence, stood as high as that of any prince then living; while the misfortunes of Louis in the Crusade had tarnished his reputation; and his simplicity in parting with Eleanor, and thus throwing so rich a prize into the hands of a hereditary rival, was so generally felt, that it is said by some historians, that the epithet of *le Jeune*, or the Young, was conferred on him for his want of prudence on this occasion, and not merely to distinguish him from his father.

The scales fell from the eyes of Louis when he perceived to what a height of power Henry Plantagenet had been raised by this unexpected match. He became, all at once, impatient to weaken, or

rather to ruin him. For that purpose he engaged in a league with his brother the Earl of Dreux, with Eustace, son of King Stephen, with the Earl of Blois, and with Geoffrey Plantagenet, Henry's own brother, for the purpose of despoiling the young Duke of Normandy of his dominions, and dividing them among themselves.

But this iniquitous league had no better success than it deserved. Henry at once protected his own country of Normandy against the confederates by whom he was invaded, and extinguished an insurrection which his brother Geoffrey had excited in Anjou. The latter prince, whose defection was equally unreasonable and unnatural, was compelled to make the most humble submission. To the admiration of all, Henry's conduct, notwithstanding his youth, was equally marked with the political wisdom and sagacity which prepare for success, and with the firmness and audacity which seldom fail to command it. He endeavoured, by every degree of decent respect and becoming moderation, to give Louis a fair pretence of withdrawing from a war which had already sickened him with its want of success. But, ere the negotiation between them was entirely concluded, a crisis arrived, which demanded the attention of the younger prince elsewhere. Henry received intelligence from England, that Wallingford castle, the most important of those fortresses which were yet held by his family partisans in that kingdom, was closely besieged by King Stephen, and the governor, Brian Fitzcompte, sent word to Henry, demanding either relief, or

permission to surrender the castle. Leaving the greater part of his forces to defend his Norman territories, in case of any renewed attempt from the confederates, Henry embarked for England with three thousand infantry, and a hundred and fifty chosen knights. His presence, though with so small a body of forces, revived the spirits of his partisans. Malmesbury, Warwick, and thirty castles of inferior strength, surrendered to the son of Matilda, and grandson of Henry. The civil war was revived throughout England with fury, when it was suddenly put a stop to by the death of Eustace, son of Stephen. The death of this young man, for whose interests, as his successor, his father had hitherto maintained the contest, removed a great impediment to peace, which was accordingly concluded on moderate terms. Stephen, now aged and childless, was allowed to retain the crown during his lifetime, on condition that he adopted Henry for his son, heir, and successor. This arrangement having settled the succession of England in favour of Henry, he returned to the continent with the same speed with which he had left it, in order to prepare against the attempts of Louis, who, always malevolent to his divorced wife's second husband, was threatening to renew the war in France to embarrass his treaty with Stephen. For this purpose, too, the French king excited commotions in Aquitaine. These were soon appeased by Henry, on his arrival, and he contrived, by some acceptable services performed to the King of France, in his quality of Duke of

Normandy, to render even the suspicious Louis once more satisfied with his conduct as a dutiful vassal.

Henry was soon after established on the English throne, by the sudden death which removed from that situation his competitor, Stephen, whose whole reign had been a continued civil war, which had its source in usurpation, and was carried on with much fury and bloodshed, as well as incalculable detriment to both kingdoms. Thus possessed of as much real power, and of more wealth than the King of France, Henry II., with a sagacity which overcame all desire to display his superiority, proposed at an interview between them four years afterwards, a match betwixt his eldest son, Prince Henry, and Margaret, Louis's daughter by his second wife, Constantia, Princess of Castille, whom he had married after his divorce from Eleanor of Aquitaine.

Sept. 1154.

A.D. 1158.

The prince and princess, to be sure, were mere infants, the first being only three years, and the latter six months old; but it was customary in those days to arrange contracts of marriage betwixt persons of their station many years before the age of the contracting parties permitted them to be carried into effect. Henry, affecting to consider himself as the honoured party in this union, lavished valuable gifts on all about the French court, whose good opinion or favourable sentiments could forward his negotiation. His liberality extended itself even to the doctors of the university of Paris, the students, and the principal citizens.

In every case of ceremony or etiquette, it was the policy of Henry to pay Louis the most ceremonious attention, and to disguise, under the observances of a respectful vassal, that formidable authority which must otherwise have rendered him an object of suspicion and jealousy to his lord paramount. He even gratified Louis's passion for a holy war, engaging to assist that monarch with all his forces, in a crusade, to be directed not against the infidels of the east, but for the purpose of driving the Moors out of Spain. Henry, however, who only meant to flatter the King of France, extricated himself from the fulfilment of his engagement, by persuading Pope Adrian, with whom he had secret influence, to express disapprobation of the undertaking.

But while punctiliously careful in rendering the homage due to Louis as his suzerain, the English monarch was cautiously enlarging his own territories, and adding to his real power. He exerted authoritatively his rights as lord paramount over Bretagne, which since the time of Rollo had been a feudal dependence on Normandy, and negotiated for a fresh surrender of the Vexin, that district which his mother Matilda had yielded up to Louis, as the price of his own first investiture of the dukedom. This strong frontier he stipulated should be the dowry of the Princess Margaret. And in other cases, where actual power could be attained, or a desirable object of ambition offered itself, Henry never allowed this ceremonious deference to the will of his superior to interfere for

an instant with its gratification. Thus in 1159, the King of England resolved to assert a pretended right to the city and earldom of Toulouse, as a fief and dependency of the dukedom of Aquitaine, which had been pledged to the present earl by Queen Eleanor's father, and which, in quality of her husband, he now set up a right to redeem. This claim, weak in point of justice, he resolved to make good with the arms of Normandy, Guienne, and England. Raymond, Count of Toulouse, the crown vassal, thus threatened, applied to the King of France, whose sister he had married, for protection against a prince, whose forces he was unable to resist; and Louis, on offering his interposition, was startled to find that Henry, so deferential and tractable in matters of small importance, was pertinacious in an equal degree in objects of magnitude. Louis had nearly been convinced of the real character of his vassal in a manner highly unpleasing. Determining to support Count Raymond against Henry, the King of France threw himself into the city of Toulouse, with a handful of soldiers, trusting that veneration for his person would withhold his vassal from any attempt on the city where he raised his own standard. Henry's forces were in readiness for the siege, and most likely he might, by a sudden attack, have made himself master of Toulouse, and of the person of Louis, thus imprudently hazarded within it. The question was debated in Henry's council, when some statesmen insisted on the sanctimonious respect which was due to the lord paramount. They

were answered by the unscrupulous Becket, then chancellor, and a favourite minister of Henry: "Advance banners!" said he, "my noble liege; the King of France laid aside his title to your obedience as a vassal, the instant he levelled a spear against you." Henry listened with a longing disposition to follow the uncompromising advice of the daring statesman. But he reflected that he was himself at the head of an army assembled only by his feudal power, and that it would be perilous to show in his own person any contempt for that fealty to the superior, upon which his own authority rested. There was also to be considered the risk of offending all the crown vassals of France, who were likely to witness with resentment the imprisonment of their common liege lord the king, by one of their own number. The result was, that with that exquisite prudence which marked his conduct, Henry, however reluctantly, relinquished the siege, alleging as a motive the respect he entertained for the person of the lord paramount, who was within the city. Louis was flattered by his moderation, and peace was shortly afterwards made, on condition of Henry retaining considerable conquests, made at the expense of the Count of Toulouse, to whom he granted, at the request, as he carefully stated, of the King of France, a truce for the short space only of one year.

A.D. 1159.

The two monarchs were so thoroughly reconciled, as to admit of their acting in concert concerning a matter of great importance to Christianity.

You are to understand, that the Emperor of Germany had down to this period always claimed the right of nominating, or, at least of confirming, the appointment of the Popes to the Bishopric of Rome. This high privilege they exercised, as it descended to them with the empire of Charlemagne. It was often disputed by the Popes, who were extremely desirous to deprive a lay prince of a privilege which they alleged was inconsistent with the liberties of the church, and contended that the election of the Pope lay in the choice of the College of Cardinals. By their obstinate opposition, supported by many wars, the Popes had deprived the Emperor of almost all vestige of this privilege But a double and disputed election having occurred in 1160, the Emperor Frederick Barbarossa took upon him so far the right of his ancestors, as to summon a council of the church to determine which of the two candidates, Alexander III. or Victor IV., was lawfully elected to the Holy See. Frederick having declared in favour of Victor, the Kings of France and England, jealous of so high an exertion of authority on the part of the Emperor, espoused the cause of his opponent. Their favoured candidate, Alexander, came in person to France, where he found Henry and Louis in arms to defend his cause, in case the Emperor should attempt to support Victor by force. The two Kings received him with the respect due to the head of the church, that is, with tokens of the utmost deference. They walked in person each by a stirrup of the pontiff's saddle, as he rode

A.D. 1160.

towards a magnificent tent, in which he was accommodated. "It was a sight," says the Catholic historian Baronius, "for God, angels, and men—a triumph such as had never before been seen in this world." Alexander afterwards held a great council of the church at the city of Tours. But the Emperor, and the kings of the north of Europe, remained fixed in their adherence to Victor, and the schism that arose from the dispute divided Christendom into two factions, and deluged Italy with blood. Alexander was so far grateful to his adherents, that he lent his intercession to place on a surer footing than it had yet assumed, the peace between the two kings.

Hitherto there had been little sincerity in the apparent good understanding between Henry and Louis, and we have mentioned many wars between them, interrupted by truces, which, though the patience and prudence of Henry sometimes soothed Louis's suspicions for a time, never, or seldom, failed to be succeeded by new subjects of disagreement. In all these disputes, Henry, more prudent, more wealthy, above all, more fortunate, had, either by war or negotiation, or both, enlarged his own territories at the expense of the French King. But in the latter part of this great king's life, the clouds of adversity seemed to gather round him, and fortune, as is frequently the case, turned from him when his hairs became grey. A very serious part of Henry II.'s misfortunes arose from his disputes with his ancient minister and favourite, Thomas à Becket.

This wily churchman had been able to conceal his real character from Henry, by appearing in an assumed one while serving as his chancellor, very nearly after the manner in which the English monarch himself had occasionally persuaded Louis that he was a faithful and devoted vassal to the French crown. At this period, as we have partly seen, the see of Rome was making the widest and most fatal encroachments upon the authority of the temporal princes of Europe, and Henry was naturally desirous of making the best stand he yet could against these extravagant claims. It was of the utmost consequence, in this species of contest, that the see of Canterbury should be filled by a prelate favourable to the monarch, and willing to countenance his interests in any discussions he might have with the Pope. When, therefore, the archbishopric of Canterbury became vacant by the death of the incumbent Theobald, Henry thought, that he could not secure his own interest better than by raising his chancellor, Becket, to that situation. This minister had always seemed to possess the manners of a soldier, a statesman, and a politician, rather than of a churchman. We have already seen, that he entertained no scruples in advising the King to bold and arbitrary measures against his lord paramount, Louis; and, judging from his conduct before Toulouse, Henry was wholly unprepared to meet from him with opposition to his will in matters where a more zealous primate might, perhaps, have given him trouble.

But no sooner had the King, with considerable difficulty, obtained the election of his favourite to the archbishopric, by the monks of Canterbury and the suffragan bishops of that province, than he was presently satisfied what an unhappy choice he had made to be head of the Anglican church. Becket, who had hitherto concealed, under a cloak of apparent loyalty and devotion to his sovereign, as much ambition as ever animated the breast of a proud man, now affected an extremity of zeal for the rights and privileges of the Church of Rome, as the mode by which he intended to rise to the dignity, perhaps, of the papal tiara itself, and distinguished himself by the audacity which he displayed on all possible questions in which he could assert the immunities of the church against the prerogative of the King. The particulars of their various and obstinate quarrels must be looked for in the History of England, where they form an interesting page, and not in that of France, which we are now engaged with. Suffice it to say in this place, that Thomas à Becket having carried to the uttermost his opposition to the King's authority, Henry, whose temper was impatient and hasty, was at last induced to express himself thus inconsiderately:—"Have I no faithful servant who will rid me of this upstart and arrogant priest?" Four knights of his royal household, men habituated to blood and slaughter, caught at the hint contained, as they apprehended, in these rash words. They rode to Canterbury and after

A.D. 1162. to 1170.

some exchange of threatening language, slew the Archbishop at the foot of the high altar, where he was officiating.

Although the King had no concern in this foul and desperate action, excepting the blame of having spoken inadvertently the rash words by which it was occasioned, he suffered the whole evil consequences which could have attached to the voluntary author and instigator of such an impiety. The cruelty of the actors was compared with the courage of the sufferer, who, whether sustained by his personal courage, or by the sincere belief that he was acting in the faithful discharge of his duty, had displayed the most undaunted composure throughout the whole bloody transaction. Superstition added to the terrors of the deed, and Becket was pronounced, not merely an innocent churchman, slain in defence of the privileges of his order, but a pious saint, who had been murdered in the cause of Heaven and Christianity. The credulity or the craft of the monks, his contemporaries, saw in their late suffering brother a glorified martyr, at whose tomb, and at the place where he was slain, the sick were cured, the blind received sight, and the lame walked. All these gross exaggerations were believed at the time, and the King was overwhelmed by the torrent of odium which he suffered on account of Becket's death, insomuch that he was fain to abandon the honourable and manly struggle which he had hitherto maintained against the papal usurpations, and to seek a reconciliation with the church on the most unfavourable conditions.

By the articles of treaty which ensued, the King
A.D. 1172. was obliged to pay a large sum of money, and engage in a crusade against the infidels, either in Palestine or Spain; above all, to permit, what he had hitherto strongly resisted, an appeal to the Pope in all things ecclesiastical. He became bound to restore the friends of Becket to his favour, and finally, to perform a most humiliating and disgraceful penance, in evidence of his sorrow for the hasty words which proved the cause of the murder.

Louis, King of France, was not idle during an interval when his ancient enemy's usual good fortune seemed to desert him, and when the boasted sagacity of Henry appeared entangled with embarrassments, from which it could not extricate him, the French King was neither slow in seeking out a just cause of quarrel, nor in the choice of means by which to prosecute it. He at first pretended displeasure against Henry for having caused
A.D. 1170. his eldest son to be crowned in England as successor to that kingdom, while the wife of that young prince, Margaret, Princess of France, was still in her native country. But Hen-
A.D. 1172. ry deprived Louis of that pretence for a rupture by expressing his willingness to repeat the ceremony of coronation, which was accordingly done two years after.

The King of France then adopted a more subtle, but certainly most unjustifiable mode of assailing an adversary who had proved too powerful for him while he followed the ordinary rules

of open hostility. Louis requested the presence of his daughter and his son-in-law, the younger Henry, for some time at the French court. The English princes of the Norman race were never remarkable for domestic affection; and, from the time of the Conqueror downward, it had been no unusual thing in that house to see the son in arms against the father. Louis, therefore, found no great difficulty in insinuating into the mind of the younger Henry, who was then eighteen years old, that his father kept the throne too long, and did not indulge him, though crowned, with a sufficient share of independent power. When the young Prince returned to England, he instilled the same spirit of unnatural ambition into his brothers Richard (afterwards the renowned Cœur de Lion) and Geoffrey. John, the fourth and youngest brother, was not of age to take a share in the family quarrel. But Queen Eleanor, the mother of the princes, had been for some time dissatisfied with the share which the King allowed to her in his councils and affections; and, as we have already alluded to her arrogant and vindictive disposition, you must not wonder if she took all the means in her power to inflame the bad passions of her three elder sons, and induce them to unite in a league with the King of France against their father.

The pretext used by Louis le Jeune for thus setting up the title of the son against the father, was, that when Henry, called the young King, was crowned, Henry II. was, by the same ceremony, deprived of the sovereign power, which was there-

by transferred to his son. Yet Louis knew, that the coronation of a son during his father's lifetime was by no means to be understood as inferring the abdication of the throne on the part of the latter, but only an acknowledgment of the son's right of succession to the authority which the father continued to hold during his life.

The King of Scotland was engaged in the same confederacy, and several of the great barons of England were ripe for rebellion. This formidable league was entered into at a time when Henry was on the worst terms with the Pope, and odious to all the priest-ridden part of his subjects, on account of the death of Becket. It was even thought, so general was the disaffection, that he would have had difficulty in raising an army among his feudatories. But he had been a prudent economist, and now made the treasures he had amassed the means of saving his throne at this conjuncture, without trusting to those vassals who might have betrayed his cause. He hired a large body of German mercenaries, men who now for many years had gained a living by their swords, and who were ready to embrace the cause of any prince in Europe who required their services, and was willing to pay for them.

At the head of these forces, and seconded by his own admirable rapidity of action, which was so great, that his antagonist, Louis, confessed that the English prince seemed rather to fly, than to sail or to march, Henry took the field. He opposed himself everywhere to his enemies, defeated

the rebels, and, offering battle to the great head of the confederacy, had the pleasure to see Louis le Jeune retreat before him, with much abatement of honour. Henry brought his mind also, in the midst of these difficulties, to submit to the most degrading part of the penance inflicted on account of Becket's death; not, we may well suppose, that so wise a prince could really have entertained compunction for the very slight share which he had in the death of a rebellious and turbulent priest, but because he was aware of the interest he would gain in the hearts of his people, by their supposing him fully reconciled with heaven, for what they considered a great crime.

When the King came within sight of the tower of the Cathedral of Canterbury, he alighted from his horse, and proceeded to the shrine of Becket, barefooted, over a flinty road, which he stained with his blood. When he kneeled before the tomb of his old enemy, whose life had cost him so much trouble, and whose death had proved a yet deeper source of embarrassment, he submitted to be publicly scourged by the monks of the convent, and by other churchmen present, from each of whom he received three or four stripes on his bare shoulders. In consequence of these, and other austere penances, Henry incurred a short fit of illness. But he appears to have conceived that he had entirely reconciled himself with Thomas à Becket, for, as that person became rather a fashionable saint in foreign countries, Henry, on more than one occasion, accompanied to

A.D. 1174.

the shrine several persons of high rank, who came from the Continent to worship there; acting thus as a sort of master of the ceremonies to his former chancellor, whom, indeed, he had the principal hand in raising to his state of beatitude. Notwithstanding all this apparent submission, Henry retained in private his own opinion on Becket's conduct. A bishop having rashly and hastily excommunicated one of his nobles, the King advised his prelates to avoid precipitance on such occasions. "There may be more bishops killed for their arrogance," said the King, significantly, "than the calendar of saints can find room for."

To Louis le Jeune, who was soon tired of wars, if long protracted and unsuccessful, it appeared that the good fortune of Henry was returning in its usual high tide, and it was consistent with his own character, to ascribe it to the reconciliation of his enemy with Thomas à Becket. It is certain that, a very few days after his penance, Henry received tidings of an action near Durham, in which William, King of Scotland, became prisoner to his northern barons; and, in the very same year, Louis had himself a nearer instance of Henry's reviving good fortune, when the English monarch relieved Rouen, then closely besieged, and compelled the joint armies of France and Flanders to retire from before it.

This chain of events had a practical effect upon the King of France. He sent ambassadors to treat for peace, to which Henry, satisfied with his success, and conscious at what risk he had won it, willingly assented. He settled liberal appanages upon

the three young princes, Henry, Richard, and Geoffrey, and endeavoured to secure their affections in future, by even profuse allowances of domains and revenues.

The greatest satisfaction which Louis received from a peace, in which all the objects for which the war was undertaken were relinquished, was the hope that Henry might be induced to join him in a mutual Crusade; so fondly was his imagination, though now that of an aged man, bent upon the project which had occupied his youth. Henry, on his part, was under the necessity of apparently consenting to this wild proposal; for it was a part of the penance enjoined him for the death of Becket, that he should take the cross and pass to the Holy Land, whenever commanded to do so by the Pope. The Pontiff, therefore, having joined the solicitation of Louis, the King of England seemed to have no choice but to obey the summons. Regulations were accordingly adopted between the two monarchs, for arranging their mutual relations, in the manner most suitable to the success of their undertaking. There is little doubt, however, that Henry, though the authority of the Pope was then too great to be openly disputed, was secretly determined to take every opportunity or pretext, that might occur, to postpone, and finally to evade, carrying into actual effect this useless and perilous expedition. A.D. 1174.

The French King, on the contrary, was perfectly serious in his idea of renewing, in conjunction with Henry, the rash and ruinous attempt of his

youth, and was determined to provide for the government of his kingdom in his absence, by crowning his eldest son Philip, by his third wife, a youth of the highest expectations, as his associate and successor in the French throne.

A singular circumstance prevented the ceremony: The young prince, Philip, who was to be the principal actor in it, was separated from his attendants, while on a hunting party, in the forest of Compiegne, lost his way among the wild and solitary woods, and wandered there all night. The youth was exhausted by fatigue, and severely affected by the agony of mind which he had undergone. The consequence was a dangerous illness. The remedies of Louis le Jeune, for every emergency, were always tinged with superstition; and, in the hope of aiding his son's recovery, he vowed a pilgrimage to the popular shrine of Thomas à Becket, where he paid his devotions with valuable offerings, and, among others, a grant to the convent of a hundred tuns of French wine annually,—an acceptable provision, no doubt, for the comfort of the monks. He instantly returned to France, and was escorted by King Henry as far as Dover. On reaching home, he found his son recovered, the renown of which greatly added to the resort of pilgrims to the tomb of Thomas à Becket.

A.D. 1179.

The sickness was, however, only transferred from the son to the father, for Louis himself was struck with a palsy. The coronation of Philip took place soon afterwards, though his father could

not be present, and it was remarkable that Philip, weak from his late illness, being oppressed with the weight of the crown, Henry, the younger, of England, lent his assistance to support it upon the young King's head. With what internal feelings he might perform this feudal service, may be at least doubtful; for, in case of the death of this, the only son of Louis le Jeune, the same Prince Henry, if his wife, Margaret, should be found capable of succession, was next heir to the crown he sustained at his brother-in-law's coronation. In the next year, Louis le Jeune died. He was a prince of many excellent qualities, brave, well-meaning, temperate, and honest; but he was neither a general nor a politician, and his devotion was of so ambiguous a character, that, while his conscience scrupled to transgress the most trivial forms, he could, on the first important occasion, if policy seemed to render it advantageous, break his faith without scruple, in matters of the most weighty moral obligation. A.D. 1180.

CHAPTER XII.

Accession, and wise measures of Philip—Death of Henry II. of England, and Accession of Richard Cœur de Lion—Philip and Richard unite in a Crusade to the Holy Land—State of the East at this period—Siege of Acre—Dissensions among the Leaders of the Crusade—Philip's return to Europe—Splendid Achievements of Richard—his recall to Europe—his Imprisonment, and Liberation—his war with Philip, and Death—Accession of John—Philip's double Marriage—Cruelty of John in suppressing an Insurrection of his Nephew Arthur in Guienne—the aggrieved parties complain to Philip, who takes the field, and deprives John of the whole of his possessions in France—In consequence of this success, Philip resolves to conquer England—Dispute between John and the Pope—Philip declares himself the Champion of the Pope, and assembles a large Army to invade England—John's submission to the Pope—Philip turns his arms against Flanders, but is worsted—Confederacy against the increasing power of France, between King John, the Emperor Otho, and the Earls of Flanders, Boulogne, Toulouse, Auvergne—Defeat of the Allies at Bouvines—Philip's treatment of his Prisoners—Truce with England—Crusade against the Albigenses—Unpopularity of King John—The Barons of England offer to transfer their Allegiance to Louis, the son of Philip—Louis's Invasion of England—Death of John, and Accession of Henry III.—Defeat of Louis at Lincoln—He withdraws his claim

to England, and retiring to France, engages in a Crusade against the Albigenses—Death of Philip.

[1180.]

PHILIP, the son of Louis le Jeune, was a prince possessing so many kingly qualities, that, in French history he is distinguished from other monarchs of the same name, by the imperial title of Augustus, a distinction, however, which he acquired from the accident of being born in the month of August. On his accession to the throne, he was not yet fifteen years of age; and it is probable he felt that his extreme youth, joined to the feebleness of his father's character, was likely to render the authority of the crown contemptible, unless respect were ensured to it by the firmness and gravity of the wearer.

Accordingly, the first public measure of Philip was one of a more severe character than could have been expected from so young a monarch. All jesters, jugglers, and buffoons, whose idle occupation it was to encourage dissipation and misuse of time, were banished from the court by a solemn edict, which the King caused to be rigorously enforced. By this his people learned that their young king proposed to assume the masculine gravity of a more advanced age, and remove from about his person all incentives to the light taste and unprofitable follies of youth.

In another of his early measures, Philip consulted, in an eminent degree, the advantage of his subjects and realm. The constant wars of France, a country which seldom remained at rest for a year

together, without the assembling of forces upon some pretence or other, had given occasion to the association of numerous vagrant bands of men, whose profession was arms, and who, without any regard to the cause in which they served, or the monarch to whom they rendered obedience, were ready to engage their skill and valour in behalf of any prince who was willing to employ them. They were generally experienced and approved soldiers, and piqued themselves on maintaining strict fidelity during the terms of their engagement, and serving with loyalty the prince by whom they were hired. Such mercenaries, were, therefore, a needful but perilous resource during this time of constant war, and even the politic and sagacious Henry II., when hard pressed by the league formed against him by Louis le Jeune, found his safety in recruiting his exhausted army with great numbers of these mercenary bands. But although a necessary, at least a prompt and useful resource to princes in time of war, nothing could be more oppressive to the people in the season of peace, than the existence of numerous bands of various nations, leading an idle and dissolute life at the expense of the oppressed peasantry, and breaking every law of regulated society, without a possibility of bringing them to justice except by a pitched battle. Where their depredations were withstood, they naturally drew their bands closer together, laid the country under contribution, and obliged the cities, on peril of assault and pillage, to pay large sums for their maintenance. These troops of lawless depredators

were distinguished by the names of Cotteraux, Brabançons, Reutiers, and Tavardins. Philip commanded his soldiers to assist the burghers of the good towns against these disorderly freebooters, and he himself engaged and defeated them in one great action, in which nine thousand were slain in the battle and flight. By these exertions, this wasting plague of the country was in a great measure checked and reformed, although it continued to be an existing grievance until a much later period of French history.

With the same attention to the public advantage, Philip compelled the citizens of the large towns to pave their streets, and to surround their cities with walls and fortifications, so as to ensure the power of repulsing the attacks of these roving brigands. The burghers disliked the expense of labour and treasure laid out upon this important object. But the King in person made a circuit around the cities of his kingdom, to enforce the execution of his wholesome edicts, and at the same time reduced to order such of the nobility, as, availing themselves of the late King's illness, had been guilty of usurpation upon each other, or encroachment on the authority of the sovereign.

The measures he pursued for the public good gave a favourable character to the reign of Philip Augustus. His intercourse with his contemporary princes was not so uniformly praiseworthy.

It must be supposed, that Henry of England was under no small apprehension of the increasing influence of a young prince, who, with better judgment than his father Louis entertained the same

jealousy of the overgrown power of his vassal of Normandy. These apprehensions became yet more alarming, when the King of England found that his children, Henry, Richard, and Geoffrey, to whom John, the youngest of the brethren, now joined himself, were engaged in intrigues with the King of France, in order to obtain a portion of Henry's French dominions, as a reward for lending their assistance to Philip, to strip their father of the whole. Embarrassing as were these unnatural cabals, the manner in which the King of England was freed from them in the case of Henry, his eldest son, was yet more afflicting. An express brought the news to the father that his son had indeed repented of his filial ingratitude, but it was coupled with the tidings that the youth lay on his death-bed, and implored his father's blessing and forgiveness. So great was the King's suspicion of those about the younger Henry, that he was afraid to intrust his royal person in their hands, even on this pressing occasion. Controlling, therefore, his desire to fly to the sick-bed of his son, the King sent him his pardon, his blessing, and a ring of gold, as a well-known token to assure him of both. The dying penitent, to show the sincerity of his repentance, tied a halter about his neck, arrayed himself in sackcloth, and commanded himself to be stretched upon a layer of ashes, and in this manner expired.

A.D. 1183.

The King swooned away three times upon hearing of the death of his son, and broke into the most unbounded lamentations. Besides the strength of natural affection, Henry, doubtless, considered his

eldest son, when he should be recalled to the obedience he owed his father, as the most likely to assert and maintain his high place as a vassal of the French crown. He had by no means the same confidence in the talents of his other sons, and was thus altogether inconsolable for the death of his eldest born.

New wars and misunderstandings between France and England arose on a pretence not of an upright nature, on the part of Henry. Alix, sister to the King of France, had been for some time residing at the court of England, under the paction that she was to be united to Richard, now the eldest surviving son of Henry II. But for some reasons, not now easily ascertained, the King of England repeatedly postponed the marriage, so as to bring himself under the suspicion that he entertained a passion for the young princess, neither creditable to his understanding nor years. King Philip now demanded at the sword's point the settlement of his sister's marriage. Other causes of discontent constantly arising between so powerful a superior and so haughty a vassal, exasperated the dispute on both sides; nor did the talents of Henry, whom age had somewhat deprived of his activity, preserve the same ascendance over the youthful Philip, which they had exercised over his father Louis le Jeune. The engagement by which both monarchs were bound to embark in a joint crusade, suspended the progress of their private wars. But, notwithstanding, a A.D. 1188. singular incident showed how inveterate was the

quarrel between their subjects as well as themselves.

The monarchs had met in a personal conference in a plain near Gisors, the frontier of their dominions, destitute of shade, except that of a single venerable elm-tree, which grew on the Norman side of the boundary. The sun was burning hot; but, instead of admitting his liege sovereign the King of France, to a share of the shadow of the elm-tree, Henry, with less than his usual courtesy, protected himself and his party from the heat under the boughs, from which they excluded Philip and his followers. The French, incensed at this assumption of superiority, though in a matter so trifling, and further provoked by the raillery of Henry's attendants, suddenly charged the English sword in hand. Henry escaped with difficulty to the castle of Gisors, several of his attendants were slain in his defence, and Philip caused the elm to be cut down, in token of his victory. In other actions, though of slight importance, Philip also gained some superiority, the rather that Richard, the son of Henry, desirous of being wedded to the Princess Alix, took part with the King of France against his father. Henry's youngest son, John, proved also disobedient, like his other children, but in a more unprovoked and unjustifiable degree. The King of England's health was broken by defeats and disgraces, to which his earlier years had been altogether strangers. His feelings were racked by the sense of his children's ingratitude, and his body at the same time attacked by a fever.

On his death-bed, he declared that Geoffrey, his third son (who died before these unnatural hostilities began), was the only one of his family who had acted towards him uniformly with filial respect and obedience. In this melancholy state, grief and mortification aided the progress of the fever which raged in his veins; and the death of this great and intelligent prince removed from A.D. 1189. the gradually increasing power of Philip one of the greatest obstacles to its farther enlargement.

The King of France, thus relieved from one of his most formidable enemies, now formed a close alliance with Richard (called, from his courage, Cœur de Lion), who, succeeding to King Henry's crown, and full of youthful love of adventure, made himself a voluntary party to the fatal expedition for the restoration of the fallen kingdom of Jerusalem, which his father had engaged in so unwillingly, and so frequently postponed. Philip of France readily adopted him as brother and companion of his enterprise. The characters of these kings had a near resemblance to each other. Both were brave, skilful in war, ambitious, and highly desirous of renown. Both also appear to have been, upon religious principle, sincerely bent upon their romantic expedition. But the character of Richard united the most desperate courage with the extremity of rashness and obstinacy, which reduced his feats of valour to the extravagant and useless exploits of an actual madman; whereas Philip combined caution and policy with a high pitch of valour, and was a much more able monarch than his rival.

though displaying in a less degree the qualities of a knight of romance.

The armies of the confederate Princes rendezvoused at Lyons, where Philip took the road to Italy, by crossing the Alps, in order to embark at Genoa, while Richard, with his host, took shipping at Marseilles.

At the time when the two most powerful nations of Christendom took arms for the rescue of Palestine, a country which their superstitions rendered so important to them, the fragments of the kingdom of Godfrey of Boulogne were fast disappearing from their sight. Saladin, King, or Sultan, of Egypt, a prince as brave, and far more clear-headed and sagacious than either of the Christian kings errant who came to attack him, and rescue Palestine from his victorious sabre, had made an eminently successful war against the Latin kingdom of Jerusalem. His power had been by degrees increasing, and the power of an Eastern despot must usually bear a proportion to his military talents. Saladin's, therefore, was considerable. He had made himself master of Egypt, and great part of Syria, and pretexts could never be wanting to assail the kingdom of Jerusalem itself, since, besides the professed animosity between the followers of Christianity and of Mahometanism, Saladin had to complain of the aggressions of a freebooting Christian baron, named Reginald de Chatillon, who had seized a fortress on the verge of the desert, from which he pillaged the Eastern caravans, and interrupted the pilgrimages of the Mahometan devotees

to the tomb of their prophet at Mecca. Jerusalem, torn to pieces by intestine divisions, seemed to be tottering to its fall, when Saladin entered Palestine at the head of eighty thousand men. Guy of Lusignan, a prince of no talents, had succeeded to the crown of thorns. He raised the whole force of the Holy Land to repel the invasion; but he permitted himself to be deluded by Count Raymond of Tripoli, who maintained a correspondence with Saladin. This renegade chief, or apostate, betrayed the Christian army into ground where the mail-clad knights of Europe fainted for want of water, and were overwhelmed by the arrows of the light-mounted infidels. Lusignan was made prisoner, with the loss of thirty thousand men. When fainting with thirst and agony of mind, he was brought before Saladin, the Mahometan courteously presented him with his own cup of sherbet, cooled with ice. But when Lusignan passed the goblet in turn to Reginald de Chatillon, who had provoked the war, Saladin instantly severed the free-booter's head from his body. "The King's cup," he said, "betokens mercy. Princes do not slaughter captive kings; but robbers like this are punished with death." Many of the military orders of Hospitallers and Templars were also put to death. Jerusalem did not remain under the Christian power for a fortnight after the battle of Tiberias, and Saladin became master of the Holy City. A.D. 1187.

The expulsion of the Christians from Palestine was not yet completed. The strong city of Tyre

was valiantly defended by Conrad of Montferrat; and the victorious Saladin was obliged to retire from before it, with considerable loss.

It could hardly be said whether the loss of Jerusalem, or the siege of Acre, had most effect in rousing to arms the warlike nations of Europe, who pressed forward in hosts to revenge King Guy of Lusignan, or gain glory or martyrdom under Conrad of Montferrat. The multitude of adventurers from Europe enabled the King of Jerusalem, whom Saladin had not thought worth detaining in captivity, to form the siege of Ptolemais, or Acre, a strong place, possessing an excellent harbour, the occupation of which might facilitate greatly the arrival of succours from Europe, which were promised on all sides. The siege of Acre had lasted till the spring of the second year. Saladin had pitched his camp, and lay with his numerous following within a few leagues of the town, and daily skirmishes took place between the contending armies. In the mean time, the new Crusade, under Philip and Richard, began to roll towards the east.

The King of France appeared first on this eventful scene, but proved unequal to decide the fate of Acre, though he tried to do so by a fierce and general assault. Richard came nearly two months after, having lingered by the way to chastise Isaac, King of Cyprus, who had offended him, and was deprived of his dominions, by way of punishment. On the arrival of King Richard before Acre (if old romances and tradition say true), he led his troops to the assault in

A.D. 1191.

person, and broke down a postern door with his strong hand and weighty battle-axe. Leopold, Duke of Austria, also distinguished himself by his personal intrepidity, for which, as armorial bearings were then coming into use, the Emperor is said to have assigned him a fesse argent, in a field gules, to express that his person had, in the assault, been covered with blood from head to foot, except the place under his sword-belt.

Saladin, who saw the fate of Acre could no longer be protracted, gave the citizens permission to make the best terms for themselves they could, and on his own part became bound to set all Christian captives at liberty, and to restore to the Crusaders the cross on which our Saviour suffered,—at least a relic which bore that reputation,—and which had been taken by him at the battle of Tiberias. But Saladin either could not, or did not, comply with these conditions. The impetuous Richard would hear of no delay, and put to death at once all his Mahometan prisoners, to the number of seven thousand men. On account of this rashness and cruelty, Richard sustained the just blame of having occasioned the death of an equal number of Christians, prisoners to the Sultan, whom Saladin slaughtered by way of reprisal.

While the furious Richard was thus incurring public censure, he had the mortification to see Philip acquire, at his cost, the praise of superior wisdom and moderation ; for, by protecting his Mahometan prisoners alive, the French King was able to exchange them for so many captive Christians, and

thus avoided a useless waste of lives upon both sides. The difference between the calm, reasonable, and politic character of Philip, began to be remarked by the soldiers, and, though the common men preferred the rude, savage, and fearless character of the English monarch, the wise and experienced leaders saw higher personal qualities in his companion and rival, and accomplishments more beseeming in a prince who would make his people happy. The consciousness that they were thus compared together, estimated, and preferred, according to men's judgment or their humour, had its usual effect of inspiring jealousy betwixt the French and English Kings, nor had the common cause in which they were engaged influence enough to check their animosities.

Another cause of discontent was occasioned by Richard's violence of temper at this celebrated siege, of which he had afterwards much personal occasion to rue the consequence. When the city of Acre surrendered, Leopold, Duke of Austria, assuming upon the merit, in virtue of which a new armorial cognizance had been assigned him, caused his own banner to be displayed from the principal tower. The fierce temper of the King of England caught fire at the Austrian's arrogance, and he commanded the banner to be pulled down, and thrown into the ditch of the place. The Duke felt the indignity offered to him, but forbore to manifest any resentment till time and circumstances put in his power ample means of revenging the indignity, though with little credit to his faith or manhood.

These various heartburnings gave rise to parties in the camp and council of the Crusaders, where Richard attached himself to Guy of Lusignan, and Philip took the part of the gallant Conrad of Montferrat, between whom there occurred many feuds and quarrels. These divisions were so notorious, that when Conrad was slain by the daggers of two of the tribe called Assassins, being the followers of the Scheik, or Old Man of the Mountain, it was reported that they had been suborned by Richard. Philip affected to give credit to a charge inconsistent with the manly, though violent character of his rival. The French monarch selected a new body-guard, armed with iron maces, by whom he caused his person to be watched day and night. Neither were any strangers admitted to him; precautions which necessarily implied suspicions dishonourable to Cœur de Lion.

With whatever views Philip of France had originally undertaken the Crusade, he quickly found that the enterprise was of a ruinous and desperate nature, and that even the barren laurels which must suffice as a reward for health, riches, and armies wasted in Palestine, would fall in an undue share to his partner in the undertaking, whose reckless valour and insatiable desire of military renown, made Richard more fitted than his rival for the insane adventure in which they were engaged, and better qualified to meet the peculiar difficulties which they had to encounter. The arrogant and capricious character of the English king required also to be soothed and kept in temper with more

attention and deference, than a monarch like Philip could find it agreeable to pay to a prince who was in some degree his inferior, in so far that he paid him homage for a large part of his dominions. Nor did it escape Philip's discernment, that if he made use at home of the troops and treasure which he was likely to expend in the fruitless prosecution of the purposes of the Crusade, he might avail himself of the opportunity to annex to the crown of France the fiefs of some of those great vassals who were daily falling in the wars of Palestine. He might also urge his purpose of withdrawing from the Holy War, upon grounds which promised advantage to the prosecution of it. For as he and Richard, being in one point of view of equal rank, agreed so very ill, and distracted the councils of the Crusading powers by their rival pretensions and contradictory opinions, it seemed that Philip, by withdrawing from the enterprise, removed a source of disagreement which was a principal obstacle to their success. For these reasons, real or ostensible, the French King determined to return from Palestine to his own country; and to silence the reproaches of those who upbraided him with deserting the cause of Christendom, he left in Syria a strong division of ten thousand picked troops, with five hundred men-at-arms, to co-operate in the task of recovering the Holy Sepulchre.

It was necessary also to satisfy, at least to stop, the complaints of Richard, who suspected that the leading motive of Philip's return was to take advantage of his absence, and make war on his Norman

and other French dominions. To avert this scandalous suspicion, the King of France, before his departure for Europe, pledged himself by a solemn oath to Richard, neither to attack any of his dominions, nor dispossess any of his vassals, while he was absent in the Crusade. Yet, when Philip passed through Rome on his return home, he made as much interest as he could with the reigning Pope (Celestin III.), to be absolved from this oath.

Philip, whose first wife had died during his absence in the Holy Land, resolved, three years after his return, to marry for a second, Ingeborg, sister of Canute, King of Denmark. With this princess, it was his object to attain a transference of all the rights competent to her family (descended of the famous Canute, King of England), and obtain thereby a pretext for invading England, as if the throne of that kingdom had been unlawfully possessed by the dynasty of Anjou. But the Danish monarch did not choose to transfer his claims, for the purpose of affording Philip the pretext he desired for attacking his late brother and companion in arms, while engaged in the religious warfare to which they had both been sworn. The plans of Philip were disconcerted by this refusal.

The King of France, whose conduct on this and many other occasions, little merits the epithet of Most Christian, bestowed on the sovereigns of his race, sought a new and discreditable channel through which to strike at his enemy. He formed a close alliance with John, brother of Richard, and young-

est son of Henry II. This Prince, one of the worst men who afflicted these evil times, was as easily induced to make efforts to usurp the territories of a generous brother, as he had been formerly found ready to rebel against his indulgent father, and he seems readily to have agreed, that Philip should be at liberty to work his pleasure upon Richard's dominions in France, provided he was admitted to his share of the spoil.

In the mean time, while his European dominions were thus exposed to an ungrateful brother and a faithless ally, Richard was rivalling in the Holy Land the imaginary actions of the champions of romance. He conquered Cesarea and Jaffa; he drove Saladin before him for eleven days of continued battle. He defied armies with a handful of men, and challenged to combat, in his own person, an extended line of thousands, not one of whom dared quit their ranks to encounter him. He even came within sight of Jerusalem, but declined to look upon the Sepulchre, which he found himself not strong enough to gain by battle. In the midst of these wonders, Richard was recalled by the news of the intrigues of John and Philip. He embarked with precipitation, having patched up a hasty peace with Saladin, and leaving a name in the East, with which, long after, the Saracens were wont to upbraid a starting horse, demanding if he thought the bush was King Richard, that he sprang aside from it!

Richard from the time of his embarkation at Acre met with nothing but a series of calamities, which gave Philip time to arrange his perfidious

plans. The King of England was shipwrecked on the coast of Dalmatia, and was betrayed into the hands of that very Duke of Austria, whom he had affronted, by displacing his standard at Acre. Leopold meanly seized the opportunity of vengeance which chance afforded him, and threw the unhappy Prince into prison, charging him with many crimes alleged to have been committed in Palestine. His place of confinement was for some time kept concealed, and the story how it was discovered, though well known, and often repeated, must not be passed over in silence. Oct. 1192.

It was no part of Richard's character to be, like his rival Philip, a hater of music or minstrelsy. On the contrary, he was an admirer of what was, at that time, called the *Gay Science*, and often practised the arts of song and music himself. Blondel de Nesle, a favourite minstrel, who had attended his person, devoted himself to discover the place of his confinement. He wandered in vain, from castle to palace, till he learned that a strong, and almost inaccessible fortress upon the Danube, was watched with peculiar strictness, as containing some state prisoner of distinction. The minstrel took his harp, and approaching as near the castle as he durst, came so nigh the walls as to hear the melancholy captive soothing his imprisonment with music. Blondel touched his harp; the prisoner heard and was silent: upon this the minstrel played the first part of a tune, or lay, known to the captive, who instantly played the second part; and thus the

faithful servant obtained the certainty that the inmate of the castle was no other than his royal master. It is uncertain if Blondel carried news of Richard's imprisonment to the Emperor, but such news reached him. Henry VI. compelled the Duke of Austria to surrender his captive to him, and being a rough, ungenerous man, he seems only to have considered how much money he could extort by having in his power one of the richest, as well as most powerful sovereigns in Christendom, the only cause of whose imprisonment was the misfortune that threw him on the coast. Philip, hearing of Richard's captivity in Germany, offered, it is said, a sum of money, provided the Emperor would deliver Cœur de Lion into his hands. Perhaps the Emperor thought it would be too detrimental to his reputation, were he to make such a transference; but although he refused so dishonourable a treaty, he failed not, for some time, to lend a favourable ear to many specious reasons urged by Philip for detaining his late ally in close confinement.

Mean time, the selfish King of France formed a fresh contract with Prince John, by which the unnatural brother was to do all in his power to assert a claim to the crown of England, while Richard's French territories in Normandy and elsewhere were to fall to Philip's share; and, that no form might be wanting, the French King despatched a herald to denounce war against Richard, then a close prisoner. The forms of public faith are seldom observed with such rigid technicality, as when they are used as a cloak to carry into

execution the most flagrant injustice. Accordingly, Philip, after using this unnecessary and absurd form of defiance against a defenceless captive, assaulted, upon various pretexts, the frontiers of Normandy, and made conquests there, bestowing towns on his ally, John, or retaining them to himself, at his pleasure; and explaining to such of his chivalry or allies as entertained, or affected, a disinclination to such unjust procedure, that he did not attack Richard in breach of his oath, but in consequence of old causes of quarrel about his sister's portion. While Philip was pursuing this system of spoliation, he received sudden intelligence, that the large ransom which the Emperor's avarice had set on the freedom of Richard, had been at length defrayed by the loyalty of his subjects. He communicated the alarming news to his associate, John, in the expressive phrase, "Have a care of yourself—the devil is loose!"

Whatever alarm these words might imply, Philip was quite aware that no pause in his ambitious project would secure him from Richard's resentment, now that the captive lion had obtained his liberty. He therefore thought it useless longer to keep on the mask; he openly invaded Normandy, and besieged Verneuil. But the scene began to change, on the part of his unnatural ally. Richard's unexpected arrival in England had entirely destroyed the treacherous schemes of the faithless John. That wicked Prince saw now no means of security, except by taking some decisive step, which would demonstrate that he had cast off

King Philip's favour, and thrown himself entirely upon his brother's clemency. The action by which he proposed to make these intentions manifest, was atrociously characteristic. He invited to the castle of Evreux, with which Philip had invested him, those Norman chiefs and officers most favourable to the schemes of the French King, and who had doubtless communicated with John himself, on the plans of plundering Richard, which he had nourished before his brother's return. Having welcomed these men hospitably, and feasted them royally, he surprised, seized upon, and murdered his guests, when unsuspicious of danger, and incapable of resistance. He cut off their heads, to the number of three hundred, and arranged them upon pikes around the castle, in the fashion of a bloody garland. By this faithless and cruel action, John meant to break all terms with Philip, his late abettor in his rebellion against his brother; but that King avenged this double treachery as the action deserved. He made a hasty march to Evreux, surprised John's English garrison, and put them to the sword, laying in ashes the town itself, as the scene of such treachery. Richard advanced in turn, and obtained some advantages, in which he took prisoners the whole chancery of the French King. But Richard was too much weakened by the rebellion of his vassals, and the impoverishment of his realm, to follow the war so promptly as his nature would have dictated. Truces, therefore, followed each other, which were as rapidly broken as they were formed, until at length both Princes

were brought, by the legate of the Pope, to entertain thoughts of a solid and lasting peace. But ere it was yet concluded, a paltry enterprise cost Richard Cœur de Lion that life A. D. 1199. which he had risked in so many affairs of so much greater consequence. The Viscount of Limoges, one of his vassals, had found a treasure concealed in the earth upon his fief. Richard demanded possession of it, treasure-trove being always considered a part of the superior's interest in the benefice. It was refused, and the King flew to besiege the vassal's castle, where it was said to be deposited. He soon reduced it to extremity; but on his refusal to grant the garrison terms, an archer took aim from the walls with a crossbow, and the bolt mortally wounded Cœur de Lion. The castle was surrendered ere the King had died of his wound. Richard commanded the unlucky marksman to be brought before him, and demanded, why he had sought his life so earnestly? "You slew," replied the archer, whose name was Bertrand de Gourdon, "my father, and my brother, and you were seeking my own life; had I not reason to prevent you, if I could, by taking yours?" The dying King acknowledged that he had reason for his conduct, and, forgiving his offence against his person, generously commanded him to be dismissed unharmed. But Richard was dying while he gave the command, and the injunctions of dying sovereigns are not always respected. The captain of a band of Richard's mercenaries put Gourdon to death, by flaying him alive, as the most cruel mode

of revenging their monarch's death which the ingenuity of these rude soldiers could devise.

Cœur de Lion was succeeded in his throne by the tyrant John. There are not many portraits in history which display fewer redeeming qualities. He was a bad father, a bad brother, a bad monarch, and a bad man; yet he was preferred to the succession, notwithstanding the existence of Arthur, Duke of Bretagne, who was son to the deceased Geoffrey, the immediate younger brother of Richard, and the senior to John. Arthur's claim of inheriting a succession which came by his father's elder brother, would be now perfectly understood as preferable to that of his uncle; but, in the days of King John, the right of a brother was often preferred to that of a nephew, the son of an elder brother, from some idea then entertained, that, in the former case, the brother was one step nearer in blood to the deceased person. But, notwithstanding John's becoming King of England, and Duke of Normandy, great discontent prevailed in his French dominions, as in Anjou, Maine, and other provinces, where the nobles and knights would have greatly preferred the sway of the young Prince Arthur to that of his uncle.

Philip King of France, whose career of ambition had been checked by the return, and formidable opposition, of Richard Cœur de Lion, foresaw that the moment was arrived when he might safely, and with the consent of the vassals themselves, resume his labours to reunite, under the immediate sovereignty of the Crown of France, the great fiefs of

Normandy granted to Rollo, and the other provinces of which the late Henry II. of England had, by his marriage with Eleanor, the repudiated wife of Louis le Jeune, and other transactions, obtained possession. The character and conduct of John made him so unpopular, that there was little doubt that the barons and vassals of the English provinces lying in France, who might have thought it disgraceful to desert the standard of Richard, especially during his imprisonment, would now eagerly transfer their allegiance to their lord paramount, Philip, in preference to the voluptuous tyrant who succeeded Cœur de Lion on the throne of England. But although this was a crisis so favourable and so important for extending the authority of the French crown, Philip was, by some domestic embarrassments, prevented for a time from reaping the harvest which had ripened before him. The circumstances illustrate the manners of the age, and are worthy of your attention.

Philip, like many other men, otherwise of high qualities, was greatly attached to women, and sometimes sacrificed his policy to his pleasures. He lost his first wife in childbed of twins, and, as we have already stated, took for his second wife the Princess Ingeborg of Denmark, with the purpose already mentioned. His marriage took place; but either from disappointment at not succeeding in his purpose, or displeased with his new bride's person, Philip determined to annul the marriage, and sent the Danish Princess to a convent before she had resided two days in his palace. The King's

aversion to the unfortunate Ingeborg was so strong, that the simplicity of the times could find no other mode of accounting for it but by supposing that it was the effect of magic—as if any magic could operate more powerfully than the caprices of a self-willed despot. With the same unjust fickleness, Philip employed some of the more subservient prelates about his court, to discover cause for a divorce, which was easily found in the usual pretext of too close alliance in blood between the wedded parties. A pedigree was drawn up to favour the plea, in consequence of which, a complaisant council of French bishops passed a sentence of divorce between Philip and Ingeborg, within three years after their separation.

The King then proceeded to marry Agnes de Merania, daughter to the Duke of Dalmatia. The King of Denmark remonstrated at Rome, where his complaints found favourable hearing, against the injury and insult offered to his unoffending daughter. The legate of the Pope having taken cognizance of this important case, declared formally that the marriage with Ingeborg remained binding, and admonished the King to put away her rival, Agnes, as one with whom he could have no legal tie. As Philip remained obstinate and impenitent, the Pope proceeded to lay his kingdom under an interdict, which, while it lasted, prohibited the performance of divine service of every kind, the administration of the sacraments, the reading the services for the dead, or for marriage or baptism, occasioning

A.D. 1192.

thereby an inexpressible confusion in the country where these divine rites were suspended, and all civil affairs, of course, interrupted. Philip, enraged at the perseverance of the Pope, revenged himself on the clergy. He seized on their temporal effects, imprisoned the canons of the cathedrals, and raised heavy taxes on all classes, by which he maintained such large bodies of mercenary soldiers, as made resistance impossible on the part of his vassals. At length, finding it difficult to remain in this state of violence, Philip made a compromise with the Pope, agreeing that he would become amenable to the obedience of the church, providing His Holiness would condescend once more to examine the question of the divorce and marriage. A council was accordingly held at Soissons, for the re-examination of an affair that was extremely simple. Fifteen days were spent by churchmen and canonists in these subtle questions, which rather perplex than enlighten justice, when, suddenly, a young and unknown speaker took the side of the divorced queen with such persuasive force of truth, that the churchmen conceived they heard themselves addressed by the voice of an angel. The King himself perceived his cause was indefensible, and resolved to take back the Danish Princess, as if of his own accord, ere yet he should be compelled to do so by the order of the council. He therefore told the Legate abruptly that he would settle the affair with his wives in his own way. He did so accordingly, with very little ceremony, instantly riding to the convent where the discarded Inge-

borg resided, taking her up behind him on the same steed, and proceeding with her in that manner to Paris, where he publicly acknowledged her for his lawful wife. Ingeborg, with the same patient obedience which distinguished her while in the cloister, returned to the world, and lived and died blameless, if not beloved. The fate of Agnes de Merania was more melancholy; she died of a broken heart at feeling herself reduced from the rank of a royal matron to that of a concubine.

By an arrangement so simply produced, Philip gained the advantage of being restored from the condition of an interdicted and excommunicated prince, to that of a true and lawful sovereign, who might justly receive the complaints of the church, as well as of inferior persons, against his vassal John, for certain enormities which were not very distant in character from those for which Philip himself had been so lately laid under an interdict.

John, whose only use of power was to forward his own pleasures, had, during a progress in Guienne, become captivated with the charms of Isabel, the beautiful daughter of the Earl of Angoulême. This young beauty was betrothed to Hugh le Brun, Earl de la Marche, and had been delivered up to her betrothed husband. But John, who was totally unaccustomed to bridle his passions, was induced to banish a wife with whom he had enjoyed ten years of undisturbed union, and, by tempting the ambition of Aymar, Earl of Angoulême, easily bribed him to accept a king for a son-in-law, instead of a simple count. This rash and

hasty action incurred much censure. The Earl de la Marche, thus deprived of his intended and betrothed bride, and bent on revenge for so gross an injury, broke out, with his brother the Earl of Eu, and other confederates in Guienne, into open rebellion. John, alarmed for the consequences—for he was well aware of his own unpopularity—summoned together his English vassals, in order to put an end to the insurrection ere it spread wider. But although the English barons had seldom hesitated to follow their kings to France, as a country where they were wont to acquire wealth and warlike fame, it was no part of their feudal obligation to serve the King beyond the limits of Britain, unless with their own free consent. On this occasion, disliking the cause or the prince, the great English barons obeyed John's summons but slowly. John was attended, therefore, by too small an army to secure the implicit submission of his refractory nobles; and while he carried on a languid war against the disaffected, the insurrection gained new and formidable supporters. A.D. 1200.

Arthur, son of Geoffrey, and nephew of John, began now to complain, that out of his uncle Richard's succession he had been only suffered to retain the dukedom of Bretagne; which was the more unjust, as Richard, when he went to the Holy Land, had designed Geoffrey his father, in whose right Arthur stood, as heir of all his French dominions. Incensed at this grievance, the young Duke, who was scarcely sixteen years of age, entertained

a secret correspondence with the discontented Lords of Guienne; and the whole conspiracy became manifest, when Philip, claiming, as liege lord, the right of deciding between John and his dissatisfied vassals, declared himself the protector of the insurgents of Guienne, and the assertor of the claims of Arthur. Both nations took arms, and on each side an ambitious and violent-tempered woman urged the quarrel to extremity. Constance, the mother of Arthur, and widow of his deceased father Geoffrey, incited her son to war against his uncle John by every argument in her power; and, on the other hand, the dowager Queen Eleanor, that celebrated heiress, who transferred Aquitaine from Louis le Jeune to Henry II., was still alive, and violent in behalf of King John, whom she loved better than her other sons, because he resembled her more in disposition than any of his brothers. These two haughty and high-tempered ladies had personal animosities against each other, and inflamed the quarrel by female taunts and female resentments. Our great dramatic poet Shakspeare has made their wrangling immortal, by intermixing it with the plot of his celebrated play of King John.

In the year 1202 hostilities commenced. Young Arthur took the field in the west of France with two hundred knights, and A.D. 1202. gained some successes, but was speedily doomed to experience in his own person a woful and irrecoverable reverse. Having, on his march through Poitou, received information that the dowager

Queen Eleanor, his own and his mother's personal enemy, was residing in the adjacent castle of Mirabel, Arthur flew to invest it, and make sure of her as a prisoner. The defence was vigorous, but at length the besiegers possessed themselves of the base court, and were wellnigh carrying the great tower, or keep, of the castle. The arrival of King John changed the scene; he was at no great distance with an army more numerous than that of his nephew, consisting chiefly of mercenaries. Arthur, with his little band, marched to meet their unexpected foe, but was completely routed, and driven back to the castle of Mirabel, where they were all either slain or made prisoners. Arthur himself, the Comte de la Marche, and two hundred knights, were among the latter; and if John could have used a decisive victory with humanity and moderation, he might have preserved his French dominions, and averted a long and almost uninterrupted chain of well-deserved misfortunes. But neither humanity nor moderation was a part of his character; and it may be remarked, that there is no surer road to adversity than misused prosperity.

The fate of the prisoners taken in this skirmish of Mirabel was atrociously cruel. That of Arthur was never exactly known; but all authors agree that he was murdered at Rouen by his jealous uncle John—some allege, in his presence, and others affirm, by his hand. Of the young Prince's allies and friends, twenty-five of the noblest and bravest were starved to death in Corfe castle.

The minds of all men revolted against the author of this disgraceful abuse of victory. The barons of Bretagne accused John at the footstool of Philip, their liege lord, of the crime of murdering their duke, and his own nephew, in the person of the unhappy Arthur. As the King of England did not appear to answer to their charge, he was pronounced guilty of felony and treason, and all his dominions in Normandy were declared forfeited to his liege lord the King of France. Thus was the crisis arrived which Philip had long waited for. Over the extensive territories held for so many years by wise, warlike, and powerful princes, there was now placed a person, who, by tyranny and inhumanity, had incurred a just doom of forfeiture, and, by cowardice and indolence, was incapable of saving himself from the consequences, by a resolute defence. Accordingly, when Philip, at the head of his army, began to enforce the doom of forfeiture, or, in plain language, to conquer Normandy for his own, it was astonishing how rapidly the structure of feudal power, which had been raised by the sagacity of William the Conqueror, and his son and great-grandson, the first and second Henrys, and latterly defended by the iron arm of Richard Cœur de Lion, dissolved, when under the sway of the selfish, indolent, and irresolute John. Joined by the numerous barons who were disaffected to King John, Philip marched through Normandy, reducing the strongholds at pleasure, and subjecting the country to his allegiance. John never even attempted to meet his enemies in the field, but re-

mained in daily riot and revelry at Rouen, struck, as it were, with a judicial infatuation, which so much affected his courage and activity, that, about the end of the year, finding the storm of war approach so near as to disturb his slumbers, he fairly fled to England, and left the dukedom of Normandy to its fate. This was not long protracted; for, without much exertion, and with the good-will of the countries, whose inhabitants had not forgotten they were by nature part of the kingdom of France, Normandy, with Anjou, Poitou, and Maine, excepting a few places which remained faithful to the English king, became again annexed to the crown of France. Rouen itself, the capital of Normandy, being abandoned to its own resources, was forced to surrender, and once more became the property of the French kings, three hundred years after it had been conquered by Rollo, the Norman.

The infatuated John threw the blame of losing so many fair possessions upon the desertion of the English barons, who would not follow him to France for the purpose of defending his Norman dominions. He more than once summoned his vassals, as if with the fixed purpose of invading the territories he had lost; but the expedition was always deferred, under pretence that the musters were not complete, until it became the conviction of every one, that the armaments were only intended to afford a pretext for levying fines on the vassals who neglected the royal summons. A single feeble attempt to cross the seas with an army, only served to show the imbecility of the English leader;

and retiring before Philip, and avoiding the combat which he offered, the degenerate John did but prove his personal cowardice and incapacity as a commander. Thus, almost without opposition, did Philip unite, under the French empire, those provinces, so long separated from the kingdom to which they belonged as a natural part. The event was the most useful, as well as most brilliant, of his reign, and must be reckoned the principal cause for bestowing upon Philip the flattering name of Augustus.

The extreme indolence and imbecility of John encouraged the King of France, who, through all his reign, evinced a high cast of ambition and policy, to extend his views even beyond the limits of the French dominions of the English prince; and pushing his opportunity against one so inactive and impolitic, he resolved to attempt achieving a second conquest of England, while its crown was placed on so unworthy a head. The success of William the Conqueror, under circumstances much less favourable, was doubtless called to mind, as an encouraging example. Some apology, or show of justice, was indeed wanting for such an invasion; for England was no dependency of France, like Normandy or Anjou, nor had King Philip a right to declare that realm forfeited as a fief of his crown, whatever may have been the delinquencies of its tyrannical sovereign. But it was John's ill-luck, or misconduct, so to manage his affairs, as to afford, not Philip alone, but any Christian prince in Europe, as full right to make war upon and dispossess him of his English dominions, as the church

of Rome, which then claimed the right of placing and dethroning monarchs, was competent to confer. The rash monarch of England laid himself open to this, by a dispute with the Pope, at any time a formidable opponent, but an irresistible one to a sovereign so universally detested as John.

This dispute, so remarkable in its consequences, arose thus:

In 1205, the right of electing an Archbishop of Canterbury was disputed between the monks of the cathedral, who made choice of their own sub-prior, Reginald, and the King of England, with the prelates of the province, who made choice of the Bishop of Norwich. Both sides appealed to the Pope, who immediately began to take the dispute under his own management, with the purpose of so conducting the contest, as to augment the unlimited power which he claimed to exercise over Christendom. The Pontiff decided, in the first place, that the right of electing the Archbishop lay exclusively in the monks. He next declared both elections to be vacant, and proceeding to fill the important situation with a creature of his own, commanded the monks of Canterbury, who had come to Rome to solicit the disputed election, to make a new choice for the office, indicating Stephen Langton as the candidate whom they were to prefer. The monks pleaded the irregularity of such an election, and alleged vows which rendered it unlawful for them to hold such a course. The Pope answered their objections by his plenary power. He dispensed with the irregularity by his

A. D. 1205.

papal authority, annulled the obligations of the oaths of the monks, and compelled them, under penalty of the highest censure of the church, to proceed as he enjoined them. John, with a spirit which he only showed when resistance was remote, remonstrated with Pope Innocent on such an irregular attempt to fix a primate on England. The Pope replied with equal warmth, calling on the King to submit to his authority, before which every knee must bow. Finally, as John continued refractory, the Pontiff proceeded to lay all his dominions under an interdict, of which the nature has been already explained to you. John endeavoured to avenge himself upon such of the clergy as were within his reach; but although imprisoned, fined, and even personally punished, the zeal of the churchmen for the cause of the Pope made them dare the fate of martyrs or of confessors.

In 1209, when the interdict had continued two years, the Pope proceeded to pronounce sentence of excommunication against John personally, by which he was, so far as the curses of Rome could have effect, thrown out of the pale of the Christian church, his subjects released from their allegiance to him, and his kingdom delivered up to any one who should carry the doom of the Pontiff into execution. More especially, King Philip of France had the express charge of executing the sentence of deposition against his neighbour of England, and in reward of his expected exertions, was declared King of that country in his stead

A.D. 1209.

Thus placed in the very position which he so earnestly desired to assume, by taking on himself the office of the Pope's champion, the politic Philip sacrificed to his ambitious views upon England the common interest of princes, and assented to the dangerous doctrine, that the crowns of reigning sovereigns were held at the pleasure of the Roman Pontiff. He assembled a large army near Boulogne, where he had provided no less than seventeen hundred vessels to transport them to England. But although dislike to the tyranny of John rendered many of his barons indifferent to his fate, and although the minds of others were affected with superstitious dread of the Pope's anathema, there were yet many Englishmen resolved to withstand the French invasion. The alarm that the kingdom was in danger from foreigners drew together an immense array, from which it was easy for King John to select sixty thousand well-armed and well-appointed troops, to oppose the French King.

Such were the preparations made to defend England from invasion, when John, by a secret treaty with Pandulph, the Legate of the Pope, endeavoured to avert the danger of the struggle. In this he succeeded—but it was only by an act of submission, the most ignominious of which the world had yet seen an example. By this agreement, the King of England made the most unreserved submission to the Pope concerning Stephen Langton's reception as Archbishop of Canterbury, which was the original dispute, professed penitence

for his former refractory conduct, and, in evidence of his sincerity, resigned into the hands of the Legate, as representing his Holiness, his kingdoms of England and Ireland, engaging to hold them thereafter, in name of vassal to the Pope, for the tribute of one thousand merks yearly.

The Pope was highly gratified with an accommodation which had taken a turn so favourable to the extension of the influence, as well as the wealth, of the church, and he issued his mandates in a tone of uncommon arrogance, commanding Philip to forbear any enterprise against John of England, who now had, though formerly a refractory son of the church, reconciled himself with the Pope, was become the vassal of the Holy See, a submissive, amiable, and benign prince, peculiarly entitled to the Pontiff's protection against all injuries. Philip remonstrated at the attempt to render him thus the passive tool of Rome, obliged as such to assume and lay aside his arms at her bidding. He thought it best, however, to comply, as he learned that his increasing power, augmented as it was with the spoils of John's French territories, was on the eve of exciting a confederacy against him among the crown vassals of France. For this reason, he turned the army designed for the invasion of England against Ferrand, Earl of Flanders, whose accession to such a league he had reason to apprehend.

The great army of France, with the King at its head, advanced into Flanders accordingly, taking some of the Earl's towns, and menacing the subju-

gation of his earldom. King John, on the entreaty of Earl Ferrand, sent to his assistance a great fleet, which he had got in readiness while the alarm of the French invasion of England impended, under the command of a natural son of Richard Cœur de Lion, called Longsword, Earl of Salisbury. The English had already acquired that superiority at sea, which has been long one of their marked national characteristics. They defeated the French navy, though more numerous than their own, destroying one hundred vessels, taking one hundred more, and dispersing the rest of the fleet. Philip, who with his nobles lost much valuable property on this occasion, was so much discouraged by a blow so unexpected from a quarter which he had been little accustomed to fear, that he desisted from his attempts against Ferrand, and retired into his own dominions.

The alarm which was excited by King Philip's increasing power and extensive ambition was far from subsiding on his retreat. On the contrary, the vassals of the crown of France, who had been engaged with other continental princes in a confederacy against the King, were bent upon taking advantage of the gleam of success occasioned by the discomfiture, and to establish, in the moment of victory, some counterbalance against the predominant authority of Philip. The confederacy assumed a consistent and alarming appearance, and well deserved the King of France's peculiar attention, as it was likely to require the whole strength of his kingdom to resist the combined assault of

so many enemies. The Emperor Otho lent his active co-operation to the confederates the more readily, as being the nephew, by the mother's side, of King John, whose French dominions Philip had confiscated with so little ceremony or scruple. The Earls of Flanders, Boulogne, Toulouse, and Auvergne, also joined the enemies of Philip, and visited England in 1214, to arrange the plan of the ensuing campaign.

It was agreed on this occasion, that France should be invaded on two sides, so as to find full employment for the forces and skill of her monarch. It was farther determined, that the main attempt should be made by the Emperor Otho and the warlike Earls of Boulogne and Flanders, aided by an auxiliary body of English troops, under command of the celebrated Longsword, Earl of Salisbury. They were destined to attack the eastern frontiers of France, with a powerful army. John himself, according to the same plan, was to cross the sea to Rochelle, where he was sure to be joined by several friends of the English interest, as well as by the Earls of Auvergne and Toulouse. Such were the preparations; the object proposed was the dismemberment of the French territories, which were to be divided among the princes of this confederacy. The allies, in accordance with the superstition of the times, consulted soothsayers on the issue of the war, and received for answer, "that the King of France should be overthrown, and trampled on by the horses' feet, and should not receive funeral rites; and that Count Ferrand of

Flanders should enter Paris in great pomp after the engagement." The allies received as propitious an oracle, which afterwards turned out to be of a different and ambiguous character: they accordingly advanced at the head of a numerous army, amounting, it is said, to one hundred and fifty thousand men. They assembled at Peronne, in Flanders, and moved south-westwards into France.

The army of Philip was not nearly so numerous, but was composed of the flower of the French chivalry, with the great princes of the blood royal, and such of the vassals of the crown as were not in the confederacy. The monarch also enjoyed the advantage of the bravery and experience of a valiant knight-hospitaller, called Guerin, who acted as quartermaster-general. Philip, having determined to prevent the wasting of his own country by ravaging that of the enemy, directed his course towards Hainault with that purpose. But in the course of their march, the French discovered the numerous squadrons of the Emperor, on the opposite side of the Meuse, near Bouvines. The river was crossed by a wooden bridge. The French noblesse on the one side, and the German on the other, rushed emulously to seize the passage. But it was occupied by the former; and the French infantry, principally the militia of the towns, passed over under the Oriflamme, or banner of Saint Denis, and formed on the western side of the river. The King had stretched himself to repose under an ash-tree, when he was roused by the horsemen

who came to apprize him that the battle had commenced. Philip arose with a cheerful countenance, and, stepping into a church which was near, paid the brief devotions of a soldier. He then advanced to the front of his troops, and recollecting that there were many vassals in his own army who were likely to be secretly affected by the reports generally, and not unjustly, spread abroad concerning his own interested and ambitious disposition, he caused his crown to be placed on a portable altar, arranged in front of his line of battle. "My friends," he said, "it is for the crown of France you fight, and not for him who has of late worn it. If you can rescue it from these men, who are combined to degrade and destroy it, the soldier who shall bear him best in its defence, is, for my part, welcome to wear it as his own."

This well-conceived speech was answered with shouts of "Long live King Philip! the crown can befit no brow so well as his own." The French army continued to defile across the bridge to support their van, which had already passed over. The army of the allies continued to manœuvre and extend its wings, for the purpose of surrounding Philip's inferior numbers. But by this manœuvre they lost the opportunity of charging the French troops, when only a part of their army had passed over, and in taking up their new ground, they exposed their faces to the sun—a great disadvantage, which they felt severely during the whole action.

The battle began with incredible fury, and proved one of the most obstinate, as it was certainly

one of the most important, actions, of those warlike times.

The command of the right wing of the allies was intrusted to the Earl of Flanders, the left to the Count of Boulogne, the Emperor having his own place in the centre, under a banner displayed on a species of carriage, on which ensign was represented the imperial eagle holding a dragon in his talons. On the side of France, the King himself, surrounded by the princes of the blood, heading the bravest of the young knights and nobles, and attended by the most distinguished of the prelates and clergy, commanded the centre. The Duke of Burgundy commanded the right wing, the Comte de St Paul the left, and Guerin, the experienced knight-hospitaller, arrayed the army, being, although a bishop elect, the most skilful leader in the field. The Comte de St Paul, who had been unjustly suspected of intercourse with the enemy, said to Guerin, when the battle commenced, "Now, you shall see what manner of traitor I am!"

At the onset, the allies had some advantage; for a body of French light horse, which commenced the attack, was unable to withstand the weight and strength of the huge men and horses of the Flemish and German cavalry, to whom it was opposed. One wing of the French army was disarranged in consequence of this check, as well as by the impetuosity of an attack commanded by Ferrand, Earl of Flanders, who was one of the best warriors on the side of the allies. The Emperor

assailed, with incredible fury and superior forces, the centre, in which Philip and his nobles were stationed. Philip made good the promise which he had given to his soldiers, and fought as desperately as any man in the field. He was at length borne out of his saddle, and wounded in the throat. Gulon de Montigni in vain waved the royal banner, to intimate the disaster that had taken place, and Philip's wars would have ended on the spot, but for the devoted loyalty of some knights, who threw themselves betwixt him and the prevailing Germans. But, almost at the same moment, the Earl of Flanders, who had been at first victorious, was, after great resistance, made prisoner, and his Flemish forces defeated, giving an opportunity for a large body of French cavalry to press closely to the centre, where their assistance was so much required. A band of the nobles who thus came to Philip's rescue, determined to attack the person of the Emperor, disregarding meaner objects. They broke through his guard, overturned the chariot which bore his banner, and seized it. They then rushed on Otho's person. Peter de Mauvoisin seized his bridle, William des Barres grasped him round the body, and strove to pull him from his horse, Gerard de Trie attempted to strike him through with his sword, and the good corslet protecting the Emperor from the blow, the Frenchman again struck with the edge of the sword, and killed Otho's horse. Yet a furious charge of some German men-at-arms relieved their Emperor, who was remounted on a swift horse, and left the conflict

in despair. "Let him go," said King Philip, who witnessed his enemy's flight, "you will see no more of him to-day than his back!"

While the Earl of Flanders and the Emperor were thus defeated, the Earl of Boulogne displayed the greatest courage, by the mode in which he supported his division of the allies. He had established a strong reserve of foot in a triangular form, behind which, as covered by a fortress, he drew up his men-at-arms, and whence he sallied repeatedly with inexpressible fury. At length, he was pursued into this retreat by the French men-at-arms, who skirmished with him for some time, unable to beat down or despatch him, as horse and man were covered with impenetrable armour, like the invulnerable champions of romance. At last, Pierre des Tourelles, a knight who chanced himself to be dismounted, raised the armour which covered the earl's horse with his hand, and stabbed the good charger. The Earl of Boulogne thus dismounted was added to the captives, who amounted to five earls of the highest name and power, twenty-five seigneurs, or nobles, bearing banners, and nearly as many men of inferior rank as there were soldiers in the conquering army. Philip, considering his disparity in numbers, and satisfied with so complete a victory, would not permit his troops to follow the enemy far.

Such was the celebrated battle of Bouvines, on the details of which the French historians dwell with national pride. It lasted from noon till five in the evening. The scruples of two ecclesiastics,

which prohibited them from shedding blood, were on this occasion differently expressed, or rather evaded. Guerin the hospitaller, who was also bishop elect of Senlis, lent Philip the assistance of his military experience in drawing up his army, but would not engage personally in the action. Another prelate, Philip, Bishop of Beauvais, thought he sufficiently eluded the canon which prohibited churchmen from shedding blood, by fighting like the chaplain of the Cid, who used an iron mace instead of a sword. With this, the scrupulous prelate had the honour to strike down and make prisoner the celebrated Longsword, Earl of Salisbury, who commanded such English troops as were in the battle.

A.D. 1214.

After the victory, Philip caused the principal captives to be conducted through Paris in a sort of triumphal procession, in which Renaud, Earl of Boulogne, and Ferrand, Earl of Flanders, were distinguished from the rest by being loaded with irons. The former being brought before Philip, the King upbraided him with his excommunication (forgetting how lately he himself had been under the censure of the church, for the affair of his divorce), and also charged him with personal ingratitude, and concluded by sending the captive Earl to the castle of Peronne, where he was lodged in a dungeon, and his motions limited by a strong chain, attached to a block of iron, so weighty that two men could not lift it. Here the unfortunate Earl remained a close captive, until he heard that his ally Ferrand, Earl of Flanders, had

been restored to freedom (though under severe conditions), at the supplication of his wife. On finding that similar clemency was not extended to him, the Earl of Boulogne became desperate, and ended his misfortunes by depriving himself of existence.

The second part of the plan of the allies, which was to have depended on the exertions of King John of England, proved as inefficient as all others which had been calculated upon the fortune and conduct of that unlucky prince. John, no doubt, carried over an English army to Rochelle, and received the homage of many barons of Poitou and Normandy, who had acceded to the league against Philip. He took Angers, the capital of Anjou, his family fief, but, except wasting and spoiling the country, he did nothing further on his side which could materially favour the great attempt of the confederates.

Philip having gained the battle of Bouvines, which might be said to secure the fate of the crown of France, by placing in his power the heads of so formidable a conspiracy, marched instantly into Poitou against John, yet showed no inclination to carry the war to extremity at present; but on receiving a present of sixty thousand pounds sterling, he granted the King of England a truce for the space of five years. For this moderation, Philip has been censured by French writers, who are of opinion he should have continued the war, until he had subdued Rochelle and the

few scattered French towns and forts which still acknowledged the dominion of England.

But Philip, who was a prince of far-sighted political views, was aware that, in the battle of Bouvines, he had been obliged to rely too implicitly upon the assistance of his feudal vassals, and might think it imprudent to make them, at this moment, more sensible of their own importance, by prosecuting new wars against John, in which their assistance would have been indispensable. A large sum of money being immediately received, he may be supposed to have calculated to have a sufficient number of mercenary forces, by help of which, at some convenient period, the wreck of John's French dominions might be gained, without the assistance of his feudal militia, and of troops which never could be properly said to be under his own personal command.

During this time, a remarkable series of transactions took place in France, the review of which I have reserved for this place, that I might not confuse them in your memory with those which I have been thus recounting.

The Popes, bent at once on increasing their finances, and extending their power, had found the utmost advantage in the practice of preaching the crusade, as the indispensable duty of all Christians, while, at the same time, they found it very convenient to accept of large sums of money from such princes, nobles, and individuals, as found it more convenient to purchase the privilege of remaining

to look after their own affairs, than to assume the cross for distant enterprises. These holy expeditions were originally confined to the recovery of Palestine. But, as their effects were found so many ways profitable to the church, it occurred to the Popes that there might be great policy in extending the principles of the crusade, not only to the extirpation of infidelity and heathenism in foreign parts, but to that of heresy at home. Accordingly, as head of the Christian church, they now began to assume the privilege of commanding all Christian people, under the threat of spiritual censures against those that should disobey, and with a corresponding remuneration to such as rendered spiritual obedience, to rise up in arms, and do execution on such people, or sects, as it had been the pleasure of the church to lay under the ban of excommunication for heretical opinions.

It was in the exercise of a privilege so frightful, by which the Popes raised armies wherever they pleased, and employed them as they chose, that the south-west of France was subjected to a horrible war. A great body of dissenters from the faith of Rome, men professing, in most respects, those doctrines which are now avowed by the Protestant churches, had gradually been extending through the south of France, and were particularly numerous in the dominions of Raymond, Earl of Toulouse. The ecclesiastical writers of the period accuse these unfortunate sectaries of practising abominable and infamous license, which they are alleged to have introduced even in their public worship; but

there is little reason to doubt that this was mere calumny, and that the Albigeois, or Albigenses, as they were termed, were a set of obscure, but pious men, whose minds could not be reconciled to the extravagant tenets of the Roman Church. They did not exactly agree in doctrine amongst themselves, and probably numbered among them the obscure descendants of the Paulicians, and other ancient Gothic churches, who had never embraced the faith of Rome, or yielded to its extravagant pretensions of temporal authority. Raymond, Count of Toulouse, within whose dominions these poor dissenters found refuge, was a prince of enlarged understanding, and, though himself attached to the established faith, was, nevertheless, willing to grant liberty of conscience to all who lived under his sway, well aware of the temporal advantages that might result from a government acting on principles of religious toleration.

Against these unfortunate Albigenses, and their protector Raymond, Pope Innocent III., at the instigation of Saint Dominic, and other furious inquisitors of the monastic orders, proclaimed a crusade, enjoining those persons who should embrace so pious a labour, to convert, by the sword, those who should fail to lend an ear to the preaching of the monks. A numerous host, great part of which was levied among the military adventurers and hired mercenaries of the age, and whose character for license and cruelty was scarcely to be matched, was assembled, under the name of the Army of the Church. They were placed under

the command of Simon de Montfort, a brave, but cruel leader, and a bigot to the faith of Rome. Under his command, these crusaders indulged an indiscriminate thirst for slaughter and plunder amid the peaceful Albigenses, without accurately distinguishing the heretic from the orthodox, under the pretext that they were extirpating evil and erroneous opinions, and thereby rendering acceptable service to God and the Christian Church.

Philip of France gave way to proceedings which he dared not oppose. He did not himself embrace the crusade against the Albigenses; but his son, Prince Louis, came under the obligation, without his father's knowledge, and against his inclination. Count Raymond defended himself till after the battle of Bouvines, by which time Simon de Montfort, with his crusaders, had attained such a superiority over the Albigenses, that he rather regarded the engagement of Louis in the crusade as matter of jealousy, than as affording a prospect of support and assistance.

In such circumstances, Prince Louis was naturally called upon to rejoice, when he was summoned by his father to exchange the fruitless and oppressive persecution against these poor sectaries, for a more honourable warfare, which had for its object the conquest of England, and the utter destruction of King John's power.

As King John's misconduct and losses became more and more conspicuous abroad, his tyranny increased at home, and as his prerogative grew in fact weaker, he enraged his subjects by attempting

to extend its limits in the most obnoxious instances. He caused the forest laws, always vexatious, to be executed with more than usual severity, casting down the enclosures of the royal forests, so that the wild deer, and other animals of the chase, might have uncontrolled access to the crops of the husbandmen. The barons were equally discontented with the people by his violent and oppressive exactions and claims, and took the field against him in such force, as obliged King John to submit to their just demands; on which occasion, he subscribed, at Runnymede, the celebrated grant of privileges, called Magna Charta, which the English still account the bulwark of their liberties. As these privileges, however just and equitable in themselves, were extorted most unwillingly from the monarch, the perfidious king took the first opportunity to endeavour to recall them. He appealed for this purpose to the Pope, whom he had created his lord paramount; and the Pontiff, who received his claim of protection most favourably, expressed himself highly offended at some of the articles of the Great Charter, and swore he would not suffer a sovereign, who was now an obedient vassal of the church, to be dictated to by his subjects in such a manner. He, therefore, annulled the grant of the Great Charter, as extorted by force, and not long after fulminated excommunications against the allied barons, and all who favoured them. John received still more powerful assistance from a large army of mercenary soldiers, whom he landed at Dover, and with whom he took Roches-

ter. By this reinforcement, the King obtained a formidable advantage over the barons, who could not always keep their feudal followers under arms, since they had their land to cultivate and their crops to gather in, whereas the mercenaries could be kept prepared for war at all times, and ready to take the field at a minute's warning.

The barons in this emergency adopted the desperate alternative of throwing themselves into the hands of the King of France, rather than submit to the tyrant John. Two of their number were despatched to the court of King Philip, offering to transfer their own allegiance, and the kingdom of England, to his eldest son Louis, on condition of his bringing an army to their assistance. The pretence of this interference on the part of France might be, that when the crown vassals were oppressed by their immediate lord, their lord paramount had a right to interfere for their redress. Even that excuse would not have justified in feudal law the substitution of the son in the fief, which, if forfeited at all, was an escheat to the father. But the case of the barons was desperate, and, conscious of John's revengeful temper, they sought for aid in the only channel where they saw a chance of obtaining it. Accordingly, the tempting offer of a crown prevailed on Philip and his son, the former in secret, and the latter openly, to accept eagerly the proposal of the barons, and to send an army of seven thousand men to reinforce the insurgent party in England, while Louis himself prepared a stronger expedition.

On the 23d of May, Louis arrived before Sandwich, with a gallant navy of six hundred
A.D. 1216. sail, disembarked a corresponding number of land forces, marched towards London, and, having taken Rochester in his route, was welcomed with acclamations by the citizens. Here he received the homage of the barons who had invited him to their aid.

Thus far every thing had been in favour of the young Prince of France, and the affairs of John went to ruin on all sides. The Legate of the Pope strove in vain to defend him by the fulminations of the church. These were addressed both against Philip and his son Louis; but as the former monarch disavowed in public the proceedings of his son, the effectual excommunication fell only upon Louis himself, who, receiving from his father by underhand means the encouragement and the supplies which were openly refused to him, and being, moreover, at the head of a military force, set at defiance the consequences of the spiritual censures. Indeed, it may be observed, that, even during this period (although that in which the Romish church had the greatest influence on the world at large), the Pope's excommunication was effectual, or otherwise, according to the opinion entertained by the nation in general, of the justice of the sentence. Thus we have seen, that a sentence of the church reduced John to almost total ruin, from which he only saved himself by the most absolute submission, and the transfer of his dominions to the Holy See. On the other hand, the curse of Rome did

not greatly affect Prince Louis, while the barons of England continued to espouse his cause. And not long subsequent to this time, Robert Bruce of Scotland, excommunicated as he was for the murder of Comyn, found the spiritual censure no great impediment to the recovery of his crown. So that it was the force of public opinion which added to or diminished the weight of the anathemas of the church.

But the affairs of Louis were deranged by circumstances unconnected with, and independent of, the Pope's sentence of excommunication, although, as the scale turned, that sentence acquired a weight which it had not when first pronounced. In the space of the first two months Louis marched successfully through England, and reduced the whole southern parts of the kingdom to his obedience. But he met a check before the castle of Dover, which was defended with obstinacy and success by Hubert de Burgh, and a select garrison. The most formidable military engine of the French was in vain pointed against the walls of a place strong by nature, and fortified with all the skill of the period. Although success seemed almost impossible, Louis continued the siege with unavailing obstinacy, and the time which he wasted before Dover gave John leisure once more to collect his forces, and afforded opportunity for dissensions to spring up among the partisans of Prince Louis. Windsor castle was besieged by the Prince with the same ill success as Dover. John was once more at the head of a formidable army, and what was still more ominous

to the cause of Louis, the English barons began to draw off from his side, on discerning that he treated his countrymen with undue partiality, and afforded little countenance to the lords of England who had joined him. A report was spread, that the Viscount of Melun had, on his deathbed, confessed a purpose on the part of Louis to put to death the barons who had joined his party, as traitors to their natural monarch. Whether the report was founded in truth or not, it was certainly believed, insomuch that several nobles of distinction deserted the cause of Louis, and returned to their original allegiance.

Many or most others were only withheld from doing the same from a dread of the false and vindictive character of John, when, at this critical period, an event took place which fortunately saved England from the dreadful alternative of a foreign yoke, or a bloody civil war. King John delivered the country from the extremity to which he had reduced it, by his sudden death, the only thing which could have relieved it. This Prince, whose tyranny had occasioned the evils of his kingdom, and the general apprehension of whose perfidy prevented their being removed, died at Newark-upon-Trent, at the yet robust age of forty-nine years, on 19th October, 1216.

A.D. 1216.

This opportune event changed the scene, for the revolted barons, already inclined to return to their allegiance, had now to treat with a young prince of the native family of their own kings, instead of a foreigner, whose faith they had some reason to

distrust, or the tyrant John, whose treachery and cruelty were alike to be dreaded.

Henry III., the eldest son and successor of John, was only in his tenth year, so that the assistance of a guardian, or protector, was absolutely necessary. The Earl of Pembroke, a wise and brave nobleman, was chosen to this eminent but difficult office. Loyal to the young Prince, he was, at the same time, friendly to the liberties of the subject, and his first act was, as a voluntary grant on the part of the crown, to renew the Great Charter of the Liberties, which John had granted with so much formality, and afterwards endeavoured to retract. This open and manly measure served as an assurance that, in the new reign, the regal power was to be administered with due respect to the freedom of the subject; and in consequence, the English barons, who could have no cause of personal complaint against the young King, began, upon this favourable prospect, to throng back to his standard, and to desert that of Louis of France.

Louis, who had received considerable reinforcements from his father, and was naturally reluctant to abandon what was once so hopeful an enterprise, still imprudently persevered in his attempts on Dover castle, without being able to overcome the resistance of Hubert de Burgh. Other indecisive sieges and skirmishes took place, until at length, in the beginning of the summer 1217, the French army, under the Earl of Perche, A.D. 1217. was totally defeated under the walls of Lincoln,

and in the streets of the town. This disaster closed the struggle, and a treaty of peace was concluded betwixt Louis and the Lord Protector, Pembroke, by which the former honourably stipulated for the indemnity of such English barons as adhered to his party, and for the freedom, without ransom, of the numerous French prisoners taken at the battle of Lincoln. Under these conditions, Louis resigned his pretensions to the crown of England, and engaged to use his intercession with his father for the restoration of the fief of Normandy, and others conquered from King John by Philip; and if his intercession should prove ineffectual, the Prince further bound himself to restore these foreign dominions to England, when he himself should accede to the throne of France. Prince Louis accordingly withdrew to France with all his forces, leaving the young King Henry peacefully seated upon the throne. Thus terminated an important crisis, which threatened in the commencement to make England a province of France, as a fair and fertile part of France had, in the time of the kings succeeding the Conquest, been the fief of England, until taken from John, who acquired from his loss of territory the dishonourable title of *Lack-land*, or landless.

Louis, the Prince of France, having left one field of strife in England, found in his own country another, which was almost equally unsuccessful. This was the renewed war against the unfortunate heretics in the south of France, called the Albigenses. These unhappy people had been

treated with much oppression and cruelty by Simon de Montfort, who came against them at the head of the dissolute and disorderly bands who were called crusaders, conquered them, and had been created their earl, or count. But he continued to persecute the heretics with such unrelenting severity, and so oppressed them, that, being able to endure their sufferings no longer, they rushed to arms, restored their old Count Raymond to the government of his fief, and became again formidable. Simon de Montfort hastened once more to form the siege of Toulouse; but the cause of the oppressed was victorious, and this cruel and tyrannical leader fell before the city, while his wife and family remained the prisoners of the Albigenses.

The Pope, alarmed at the success of these heretics, as he termed them, became urgent with King Philip to be active against them, while an assembly of the church, held at Mantes, again determined on preaching the crusade against the Albigenses. Philip, although he himself had gone to Palestine, in his memorable crusade with King Richard, was by no means a favourer of these impolitic expeditions. On the other hand, he dared not refuse the request of the Pope and clergy, and reluctantly permitted his son Louis, with an army of fifteen thousand men, again to take the cross against the heretics in the south of France. But the prince prosecuted the war with so much coldness, that it was supposed he was either indifferent in the cause himself, or had private instructions from his father

not to conduct it with activity. At length he was recalled from the enterprise entirely, by his father's command. The pretext was the necessity of the prince's attendance on a grand council, to be held at Mantes, for considering an offer made by Amaury, son of Simon de Montfort. This young man, the heir of the title which his father had acquired over Toulouse by his first conquest, thought he perceived the reason why France was so cold in recovering these possessions. He therefore proposed to cede to the crown of France his own right to the earldom, that Philip and his son might have a deep personal interest in carrying on the war with vigour. This would probably have given more activity to the movements of Philip Augustus against the Albigenses. But he did not survive to accept of the cession offered by De Montfort, as he died of a fever at Mantes, in July, 1223. He was incomparably the greatest prince that had held the French sceptre since the days of Charlemagne. At his death, he left the proper dominions of France nearly doubled in extent, by his valour and prudence, and greatly improved in wealth, strength, and convenience, by the formation of roads, the fortification of defenceless towns, the creation of public works, and other national improvements, arising from his wise administration. He was in general successful in his military exploits, as much owing to the sagacity with which he planned, as to the bravery with which he executed them. The battle of Bouvines, in particular, was one of those decisive contests up-

A.D. 1223.

on which the fate of nations depends; and had Philip been defeated, it is certain that France would have been divided by Otho and the confederates, and doubtful, to say the least, whether it could have been again united into one single kingdom of the first rank.

CHAPTER XIII.

Accession of Louis the Lion—War with England—Crusade against the Albigenses—Accession of Louis IX.—Regency of Queen Blanche—Conspiracy of the Crown Vassals suppressed—Louis assumes the Cross—Lands at Damietta, and captures that place—Disasters of the French in their march to Grand Cairo—Louis and great part of his army taken prisoners—Negotiations for their Ransom—Murder of the Sultan by his Body Guard—Conduct of the Assassins towards the French King—Confinement of the Queen during her Husband's captivity—Louis returns to France, on the death of his Mother—his Despondency.

[1223–1254.]

PHILIP AUGUSTUS was succeeded in his throne by his eldest son, Louis VIII., whose unsuccessful wars in England we have already noticed. He was called by the surname of the Lion, from his personal courage, doubtless, rather than from his success in arms, of which last he had not much to boast.

He had scarcely mounted the throne, when he was greeted by an ambassador from Henry III., demanding the restoration of the provinces which the English monarch's ancestors had held in France, in terms of the treaty made and sworn to when he

left England in 1217. Louis was, however, determined on no account to comply with this article, the fulfilment of which would have occasioned the revival of the English power in France, which had been so serious a subject of annoyance and apprehension to his predecessors. In vindication of the breach of his oath, he alleged that the English, on their part, had not fulfilled the treaty of 1217, that some of the English barons of his party had met with usage contrary to the promise of indemnity pledged in their behalf, and that some French prisoners, made at the battle of Lincoln, instead of being set at liberty in terms of the compact, had been compelled to ransom themselves.

Taking upon him, therefore, the character of one who had sustained, and not inflicted a wrong, King Louis, instead of restoring Normandy, proceeded, in imitation of his father's policy, to invade and besiege those towns which the English still possessed in Poitou; and Niort, Saint Jean d'Angeli, and finally Rochelle itself, fell into his hands, after a valiant defence. Bourdeaux, and the country beyond the Garonne, was the only part of the ample dominions within France, once acknowledging the English authority, which still remained subject to that power. This territory would probably have followed the fate of the other forfeited or reconquered fiefs; but Henry III., now a young man, sent an expedition, commanded by his brother Richard, Earl of Cornwall, and consisting of a considerable number of troops, to its relief. At the same time he created Richard Count of Poitou

The Gascons were favourable to the English, with whom they maintained a profitable traffic. They were also flattered by the proposal to place them immediately under the command of a prince of the English blood royal, and prepared to resist the invasion of Louis so obstinately, that the King of France thought it judicious to consent to a truce for three years. He had indeed still upon his hands the civil war with the Albigenses; and though he has been blamed for granting the English a truce, it may be supposed he acted wisely in undertaking only one of these formidable enterprises at a time.

A.D. 1224.

He was urged to renew the crusade against the southern heretics, by the legate of the Pope, but in consenting to do so, failed not to secure such personal interest in the adventure, as might insure to himself the principal advantage of its success. For this purpose, Louis renewed the treaty which his father had commenced with Amaury de Montfort, and promising to that Count the post of High Constable of France, when a vacancy should occur, he accepted from him the cession of all the rights he inherited from his father, as Count of Toulouse.

Having thus provided for his own interest in the undertaking, the King assembled an army of fifty thousand men, consisting of the best and boldest of his vassals, at the head of their followers. With this large force he first besieged Avignon, where the citizens were at first disposed to open their gates, but refused to receive any person within

them, except the King with his ordinary train. But unlimited access was demanded, and the townsmen, afraid too justly of pillage and massacre, shut their gates, and stood on their defence. They fought with the utmost obstinacy, and the besiegers lost above two thousand men, amongst whom was that celebrated Comte de Saint Paul, who had acquired so much honour at the battle of Bouvines. At length the citizens of Avignon were compelled to submit to a capitulation, the terms of which were uncommonly severe. The establishment of the Roman Catholic religion was exclusively provided for; and two hundred hostages were given to that effect, sons of the most wealthy inhabitants. Some of those who had conducted the defence were hanged, or otherwise punished; the fortifications were dismantled; the ditches filled up; and three hundred of the best houses were levelled with the ground, to complete the humiliation of the city.

After Avignon had surrendered, it was the intention of Louis to march against Toulouse, and inflict a similar vengeance on that town, the metropolis of the revolted provinces. His army, however, had suffered so severely from want of provisions, from the sword, and from pestilential disease, that the King was compelled to grant the troops some relaxation from military duty, which they were not at the time capable of discharging.

But Louis had himself performed before Avignon his last campaign. On retiring to Montpen-

sier, he was seized with a fever, of which he died, 12th November, having reigned only four years, and being in the very prime of his manhood. He was succeeded by his only son, who bore his own name, and was afterwards distinguished in the royal catalogue by the title of Saint Louis. The epithet of Saint, in those superstitious times, inferred at least as much weakness as virtue; and we shall see that Louis, while he was an honour to the character in the higher virtues, was not without the imperfections usually attending a reputation for sanctity, comprehending, of course, much devotion to the Pope, and great liberality to the church.

A.D. 1226.

The Queen Blanche, relict of the deceased monarch, acted as regent for her son. She was the eldest daughter of Alphonso, King of Castile, by his wife Eleanor, daughter of the celebrated Eleanor of Aquitaine, by her second marriage with Henry II. of England. The character of Blanche, during the life of her husband, had not been called forth to any remarkable display; but Louis VIII., who had great confidence in her wisdom, had named her in his settlement the Regent of France, until his son should attain the years of majority. She had, therefore, an arduous duty to discharge, especially as very many of the crown vassals of the highest rank, dissatisfied with the power attained by the King during the last two reigns, had formed a league together, upon the principle of that which was adopted by the confederates previous

to the battle of Bouvines, and the purpose of which, Philip's victory in that battle had for the time disconcerted.

The opportune occurrence of a minority, during which the royal authority was to be administered by a female, and a foreigner, seemed, to various of the petty princes, who were ambitious of rivalling the King in all but the name, a time highly fitted for recovering by force, if necessary, that degree of independence of which they had been deprived by the policy and success of Philip Augustus and his shortlived son, Louis the Lion. The still existing insurrection of the Albigenses was a great encouragement to the confederates, and Raymond of Toulouse was one of the most zealous of their number. He was one who could be easily justified; for, while the others became rebels and conspirators for objects of personal power and ambition, to which they had a very doubtful claim, Raymond was a prince unjustly deprived of his territories, which he was naturally desirous to recover.

The other nobles engaged in the conspiracy against the Queen Regent were, Philip, Count of Boulogne, the brother of the late King, who claimed the regency, as of right appertaining to him by descent; the powerful Earls or Counts, Thiebault, of Champagne, Hugh de la Marche, Hugh de Saint Paul, Simon de Ponthieu; there was, besides, Peter, Duke of Bretagne; all princes of the first rank for wealth and power, which it was their object to hold with no greater degree of de-

pendence on the Crown of France than they might find indispensable. In fact, it was their object to deprive the King of all power, beyond what might become a president of the *cour plénière*, and general of the armies of the kingdom.

Alone, or nearly so, a stranger and a woman, opposed to so many powerful nobles, Blanche conducted herself with great courage and ability. Ere the confederates had matured their plan of hostilities, she suddenly attacked Raymond of Toulouse, and reduced him to ask terms, by which he became bound to renounce the heretical opinions of the Albigenses, and to give his daughter and heiress in marriage to Alphonso, her own fourth son by the late King, and thus secured the final reversion of these rich territories to the royal family.

The next part of her undertaking was the subjugation of the other confederates, who laid aside the mask, and began to show their real purpose; and here her female power, extreme beauty and corresponding address, were of the greatest service. Thiebault, Count of Champagne, a prince of great possessions, was renowned alike as a good knight, and as an excellent troubadour, or poet, in which capacity he had, even during the life of her husband, Louis VIII., selected as the theme of his praise, and the sovereign mistress of his affections, no other than Blanche herself. The adoration of a poet, in those times, had in it nothing that was necessarily hurtful to a lady's reputation; nevertheless, it was said the Queen had expressed resentment at the liberty which the Count of

Champagne had taken in fixing his affections so high, and in making his admiration so public. It is even surmised, that the severity with which the Queen treated the enamoured poet, was so highly resented by him, that his mortification was the cause of his joining the confederates. But a woman of address and beauty knows well how to recover the affections of an offended lover; and if her admirer should be of a romantic and poetical temperament, he is still more easily recalled to his allegiance. It cost the Queen but artfully throwing out a hint, that she would be pleased to see Thiebault at court; and the faithful lover was at her feet, and at her command. On two important occasions, the enamoured troubadour disconcerted the plans of his political confederates, like a faithful knight, in obedience to the commands of the lady of his affections.

Upon one of these occasions, Count Thiebault gave private intimation of a project of the malecontents to seize the person of the Queen, on a journey from Orleans to Paris. Their purpose, being once known, was easily defeated, by the Queen-mother throwing herself and her son into a strong fortress, till a suitable escort was collected to ensure their passage in safety to the capital. On another occasion, the King having called an assembly of his nobles to oppose Peter of Bretagne, who had appeared in open arms, the conspiring nobles agreed to bring each to the rendezvous a party of followers, in apparent obedience to the royal command, which, though it might

seem but moderate, in regard to each individual Prince's retinue, should, when united, form a preponderating force. But this stratagem was also disconcerted by the troubadour Earl of Champagne, who, to please his royal mistress, brought a stronger attendance than all the others put together, so that, as none of the other great vassals dared to take the part of the Duke of Bretagne, he was obliged to submit to the royal authority.

The Count of Champagne had like to have paid dearly for his compliance with the pleasure of his lady-love, instead of pursuing the line of politics of the confederates. He was attacked by the whole confederacy, who, enraged at his tergiversation, agreed to expel him from his country, and confer Champagne upon the Queen of Cyprus, who had some claim to it, as heiress of Thiebault's elder brother. Blanche was so far grateful to her devoted lover, that she caused her son to march to his succour, and repel the attack on his territories. Yet she sought to gain something for the crown by this act of kindness, and therefore intimated to the Count, that, to defray the expenses of the war, and compensate the claims of his niece, it would be expedient that he should sell to the young King his territories of Blois, Chartres, Chateaudun, and Sansevre. The Count murmured forth some remonstrances in being required to part with so valuable a portion of his territories. But so soon as Blanche, with a displeased look, reproached him with his disobedience and ingratitude, he fetched a deep sigh as he replied, "By my faith,

madam, my heart, my body, my life, my land, are all at your absolute disposal!" The crown of France acquired the territory accordingly.

It does not appear that the devotions of this infatuated lover were offensive to Queen Blanche herself, who, as a woman, might be proud of her absolute influence over a man of talents, and, as a politician, might judge it desirable to preserve that influence over a powerful nobleman, when it was maintained at the cheap price of an obliging word or glance. But some of the French courtiers grew impatient of the absurd pretensions of Thiebault to the Queen's favour. They instigated Robert of Artois, one of the sons of Louis VIII., who was little beyond childhood, to put an affront upon the Count of Champagne, by throwing a soft cream cheese in his face. Enthusiasm of every kind is peculiarly sensible to ridicule. Thiebault became aware that he was laughed at, and as the rank and youth of the offender protected him from the revenge of the insulted party, the Count of Champagne retired from the court for ever, and in his feudal dominions endeavoured to find consolation in the favour of the muses, for the rigour, and perhaps the duplicity, of his royal mistress. This troubadour monarch afterwards became King of Navarre, and his extravagant devotion to beauty and poetry did not prevent his being held, in those days, a sagacious as well as accomplished sovereign.

Other intrigues the Queen-mother was able to disconcert, by timely largesses bestowed upon the needy among the conspirators, while some she

subdued by force of arms. In the latter case, she committed the conduct of the royal forces to Ferrand, Earl of Flanders, the same who was taken prisoner at the battle of Bouvines, who conducted himself with all the fidelity and intelligence she could have desired. And, in short, by patience, courage, policy, and well-used opportunity, Queen Blanche not only preserved that degree of authority which was attached to the throne when she was called to the administration of affairs, but consolidated and augmented it considerably.

It may be that the wars and intrigues of the Queen of France would have ended less fortunately, if the weight of England had been thrown into the opposite scale; and you may wonder that this was not the case, since no time could have occurred more suitable than the minority of Saint Louis, for the recovery of those French territories which the skill and conduct of Philip Augustus won from the imbecility of his contemporary, King John. Indeed, at the accession of Louis VIII., when the period was less favourable, Henry III., or his counsellors, had, as we observed, made a formal demand that Normandy, and the other provinces claimed by England, should be restored. But although many of the barons of the provinces once attached to England offered their assistance eagerly; although the possession of Bourdeaux rendered a descent easy: although the Duke of Bretagne, whom we have mentioned as a chief of the league against the crown of France, endeavoured to urge the court of England to an invasion, which he

pledged himself to support with his utmost force; yet the character of Henry III. of England was totally unfit for such an undertaking. He had some of his father John's faults, being, though less cruel than him, fully as timid in his person, and as rash in his attempts. He was extravagantly expensive, and notoriously faithless; an encroacher upon the rights of his subjects, and repeatedly guilty of the breach of his most solemn promises and engagements to them. Henry was also, like his father, an indolent and wretched conductor of an undertaking requiring activity and resolution. In 1229, Henry did indeed A.D. 1229. attempt his long-threatened invasion of France; but with so little preparation, that, when his army was assembled, it was found there had been no care taken to provide an adequate number of vessels. They passed to St Malo, however, and were joined by the Duke of Bretagne, with all his forces; but instead of leading the army to action, Henry spent the money which had been provided for their support in mere lavish and expensive follies, and returned to England after three or four months' idle and useless stay in France, almost without having broken a lance in the cause which had induced him to leave his kingdom. On returning to England, this imprudent prince became engaged in those intestine divisions with his people which were called the Barons' Wars, and which left him no time, if he had had inclination, to trouble himself about the affairs of France. Mean time, the Duke of Bretagne, deserted by his ally, was hard

pressed by the royal forces, and demanded a respite only till he should make application to Henry for relief. On receiving a refusal, the unfortunate Duke saw himself obliged to present himself before his sovereign, the King of France, with a halter round his neck, and solicit mercy in the most humiliating terms. The disgrace of this pageant lay with the English King, whose neglect to support his ally had rendered this scene of abject submission the only road to safety which the deserted Prince could pursue.

England being thus occupied with her internal quarrels, the Queen-mother Blanche met with no interruption from that quarter, while she extended the power of her son over the discontented vassals whose object it had been to restrict it. But with her grandmother Eleanor of Aquitaine's masculine energies of disposition, Blanche possessed no small share of her ambition. She was in no hurry to surrender to her son the supreme power which she had administered so well; nor did the dutiful Louis, though now approaching his twenty-first year, seem impatient to take upon himself the character of governor. On the contrary, although he assumed the name of sovereign, yet he continued to yield to the Queen-mother, at least in a great measure, the actual power of administration.

It was said, that this deference to maternal authority, more implicit than was becoming for him to yield, or his mother to exact, arose from his having been educated more like a monk, to whom strict obedience is one great duty enjoined, than

like a sovereign, who was not only to think for himself, but to decide upon the actions of others. Signs of this monastic education were to be seen in the bigoted attachment with which the future saint regarded every thing either really religious, or affecting to be so; and the narrowness of his mode of thinking in this respect led to the principal misfortunes of his reign. It is possible, however, that committing his education almost entirely to churchmen, might be a measure adopted as much from the Queen-mother's own superstitious feelings, as from a desire to keep her son in the background.

Blanche's jealousy of those of her own sex who approached her son, and sought to please him, was not, perhaps, an extraordinary, though an inconvenient excess of maternal fondness. But she was singularly unreasonable in extending her jealousy to her son's wife, a beautiful woman, Margaret, one of the daughters of Raymond Berenger, Count of Provence. The servants of the household had orders when the King and Queen were in private together, to whip the dogs which were about the royal apartment, so that the cries of the animals might give the Queen-mother a hint to burst in on the retirement and privacy of her son and his wife. The young Queen reproached her mother-in-law with this jealous vigilance; and when Blanche caused Louis to remove from the apartment in which his wife was about to be confined, "You will not let me speak with my husband," said Margaret, "whether living or dying."

The docility of the son, in a case where he had

a reasonable excuse for resistance, seems to have been carried to an amiable excess. Yet it is certain, that, whether her conduct in this particular arose out of policy or mistaken fondness, the love of Blanche for her son was equally sincere and maternal. In the bias, however, which his mind had taken towards a strict interpretation of his duties in morality and religion, tinged as the latter was with the superstition of his age, it was plain that the first impulse which Louis might consider as a direction from heaven, would induce him to fall into the prevailing error of the time, by assuming the cross, and departing for the Holy Land.

Accordingly, a sudden illness, in which he remained insensible for the space of twenty-four hours, struck the young King with such alarm, that he took the cross from the hands of the Archbishop of Paris, and made a solemn vow to march in person against the infidels with a royal army. It was in vain that the wisest of his ministers pointed out to Louis the disasters which his predecessors had sustained by such imprudent and ill-fated engagements. Even his mother, though his departure must restore her to full power as regent, in name as well as authority, dissuaded her son from this fatal enterprise. In reply, the King maintained, that as he had continued to recover hourly since his vow was taken, the purport of it must of course have been agreeable to the Divine will; and he would only promise that he would endeavour to arrange the preparations for his enterprise, at full leisure, and with as much precau-

tion as should secure its success, and the safety of his dominions during his absence. He obtained from the church a grant of the tenth of the clerical revenues, to sustain the expense of his undertaking. Gradually, too, he prevailed upon many of the nobility, and among these the Count de la Marche and the Duke of Bretagne, two of the most powerful and turbulent of their number to follow his example, and accompany him to the East.

The motions of the future saint were arrested during his preparations, by the arrival at his court of Richard, King of the Romans, brother of Henry III. of England, with an embassy from that power. "Sir King of France," said this distinguished envoy, "you cannot undertake to wage a holy war against the infidels, until you do justice to your brother of England, bereft as he has been by your father of the provinces belonging to him in France."

The King of France was so much startled at this objection to his purpose, that he referred the case, as a scruple of conscience, to a conclave of Norman bishops; and it was not till they formally gave their opinion that no restitution should be made, that Louis declined the request of the King of the Romans.

King Louis now prepared for his Crusade, and departed, carrying with him his young wife, although the fate of Louis le Jeune afforded a strong warning against such companionship. Robert of Artois, and Charles of Anjou, his two brothers,

also accompanied the King in his adventurous expedition. Passing down the Rhone from Lyons, he embarked from the shores of the Mediterranean, and landed at Cyprus on the 25th September, 1248. It was his purpose to proceed from thence in the spring, in order to invade the kingdom of Egypt; for experience had made it obvious, that, although Palestine might be conquered for a season, it could never be effectually protected or defended, as an independent Christian state, until the infidels should be deprived of the populous and rich kingdom of Egypt, which lay so near the Holy Land. The number of his army amounted to about fifty thousand men, of which it was computed there were ten thousand cavalry; and they disembarked in safety, as they had proposed, before the town of Damietta. Here Louis, who, with all his superstition, displayed a great fund of personal worth and bravery, sprung into the sea in complete armour, waded ashore among the foremost, with the Oriflamme displayed, and made good his landing in spite of twenty thousand men, by whom the shore and city of Damietta were defended. The invaders seized upon, and garrisoned the city, which was opulent, extensive, and well fortified. Louis, with wise precaution, took into his custody the magazines which they had acquired in the storm which followed the capture; but the subordinate leaders of the Crusade were dissatisfied, contending that, on such occasions, the share of the commander-in-chief was limited to one-third of the spoil, and that the

A.D. 1248.

A.D. 1249.

rest belonged to his associates. This introduced dissatisfaction and insubordination among the feudal lords, and greatly affected Louis's authority.

Want of discipline being thus introduced, it was speedily perceived that the army of Saint Louis was not of better morals than those of other Crusaders, and the utmost licentiousness was practised, under the countenance of some of the courtiers, within a stone's cast of the King's own pavilion. In the mean time, the Crusaders remained in Damietta, waiting, first for the abatement of the inundation of the Nile, and thereafter for the arrival of Alphonso, Count of Poitiers, Louis's third brother, who had been separated from him by stress of weather, or, as others say, had been a year later in setting out from France. This Prince arrived at length; and Louis resolved to sally from the city for the purpose of marching to Grand Cairo, which the invaders termed Babylon. But the river Nile, which the Christians believed to come from the terrestrial Paradise, was at that time still in flood, and interrupted their march on every side. One broad canal, in particular, opposed their passage. As they had neither boats nor bridges, the Crusaders attempted to cross the canal by means of a mound —an awkward contrivance, in which they totally failed. While engaged in this fruitless labour, the Christians were opposed at every turn by the light-armed Saracens, who attacked the military engines by which they endeavoured to cover their passage, with balls of Greek fire, a species of inflammable matter shot from the artillery then in use, extreme-

ly difficult to quench, and which flew through the air, resembling in appearance a fiery dragon. Saint Louis himself seems rather to have sought refuge in his tears and devotions, than in attempting to stop the conflagration. The Crusaders were obliged to renew the engines which had been destroyed, with such part of the ships as could be dismantled for that purpose. The Count of Artois, with imprudent valour, found at length the means of passing the canal at a dangerous ford; and, instead of halting till he was supported, rushed on with two thousand horse, and forced his way into the village of Massoura, where the Saracens gave themselves up for lost. But their troops being rallied by a valiant soldier, who was afterwards raised to the rank of sovereignty, the advanced party of the Count of Artois were enclosed within the village. The inhabitants poured on them stones, javelins, arrows, scalding water, and all sorts of missiles, from the roofs of the houses, which were flat, and well adapted to this species of defence. Most of the Christians were slain; and the Count of Artois, after having for some time defended himself in one of the houses of the village, at length fell, fighting valiantly.

The King, when his brother's death was reported to him, wept bitterly for the loss he had sustained; and was much grieved when he heard that the chief of the Saracens displayed the coat-of-armour of the fallen Prince, as if it had been that of the King himself. Although the French had the worst in this unequal and confused battle, their

chivalry maintained the reputation which it had in Europe. Louis, surrounded by several Saracens, defended himself against them all; and when six of the principal Mamelukes took shelter behind a heap of stones, from the shot of the French cross-bows, to which they replied with arrows and Greek fire, a stout priest, called John de Waysy, clad in his cuirass and head-piece, and armed with his two-handed sword, rushed on them so suddenly, that, astonished at his resolution, they dispersed themselves and fled. But notwithstanding these, and many other feats of arms highly honourable to the Crusaders, the losses of the Saracens were easily replaced; whereas, every soldier that fell on the part of the French was an irreparable loss. A subsequent action, in which the Greek fire was showered upon the Christians, so that it covered even Louis's own horse, and burnt whatever was opposed to it, both men and military engines, completed the disasters of this unfortunate army. The invaders were now reduced to a defensive warfare; and this was sustained at the greatest disadvantage. A dreary duty remained, after these battles were over. The King, says his historian Joinville, hired a hundred labourers to separate the bodies of the Christians from those of the Pagans; the former were interred; the Saracens were thrust under the bridge, and floated down to the sea.

"God knows," says the gallant knight, "how noisome was the smell, and how miserable it was to see the bodies of such noble and worthy persons lie exposed. I witnessed the chamberlain of the

late Count of Artois seeking the body of his master, and many more hunting after those of their friends; but none who were exposed to the infectious smell, while engaged in this office, ever recovered their health. Fatal diseases in consequence broke out in the army; their limbs were dried up and destroyed, and almost all were seized with a complaint in the mouth, from which many never recovered." The scurvy, which is intimated by this last disease, made frightful ravages among the Crusaders, a part of whom were now cooped up in Damietta, or under its walls. The Saracens dragged their armed galleys across the land, and launched them in the Nile, beneath the city, which was thus blockaded by land and water. Provisions were extremely scarce, and the eels of the river, which fed upon the numberless dead bodies, became the principal subsistence of the French army, and increased the pestilential disease.

The condition of the Christians became now so desperate, that Louis resolved to retreat to Damietta, and call in all the outposts and vanguard of his army, which were on their march to Cairo. The King himself might have made his retreat in safety by water; but it was no part of his plan to desert his army. He himself quitted his own battalion, and, with Sir Geoffrey de Sergines, joined the rear division, thus continuing his countermarch as far as the town of Casel. In the latter part of his retreat, the Turks came so close upon him, that Sir Geoffrey was obliged to drive them off with strokes of the blade and point of his sword; at

length, the unfortunate Prince was reduced to such a state, that he was obliged to lie down with his head in the lap of a female, who had come from Paris; he expected every moment to die in that posture. Walter de Chatillon, with the constancy of a gallant knight, planted himself alone at the door of the house in which the King lay, attacked every infidel who passed, and put them repeatedly to flight. The King, who saw him rush to the attack alone, brandishing his sword, and rising in his stirrups, exclaimed in his hour of distress, "Ha, Chatillon! gallant knight, where are all our good companions?" The faithful knight was at length overpowered by numbers, and his fate made known by the condition of his horse, which was seen covered with blood in the possession of a Saracen, who claimed the merit of having slain its gallant master.

In the mean time, most of those who had fled, rather than retreated, towards Damietta, had already been slaughtered by the Saracens, or had delivered themselves up to captivity. Even the deplorable catastrophe of the expedition of Louis le Jeune was far less unfortunate in its consequences, than the present Crusade. The King and his two brothers, many princes of the blood royal and high noblesse, and the wreck of his noble army, fell as captives into the hands of the infidels, and were treated with the most atrocious severity.

Upon the first surrender of the prisoners, the only choice assigned them was that of embracing the Moslem faith, or instant death; and by far the

greater part preferred the latter. When, however, it began to be discovered that most of the prisoners had the means of paying a high ransom, the barbarians, into whose hands they fell, became more thirsty of lucre than of bloodshed, and exchanged for ransom most of those who were able to comply with their demands. The Sultan of Egypt began also to reflect that Damietta was still garrisoned by the Christians, and might safely apprehend their retaining it till succours should come from Europe. These considerations made him desirous of an accommodation, by which he might rid Egypt of its troublesome visitors.

But the nature of the government to which that country was then subjected, rendered the fate of the prisoners extremely uncertain, and precarious; and to enable you to understand the circumstances in which they were placed, it is necessary to explain what the nature of that government was.

Touran Shah, the reigning Sultan of Egypt, was a great-grandson of the brother of the famous Saladin, whom we have seen the opponent of Richard Cœur de Lion; but the followers of these sultans had been rendered effeminate by the pleasures of a rich country, and were no longer capable of engaging in battle, or obtaining victory over such rugged opponents as King Louis and his Franks. To supply this general deficiency of courage and spirit in their soldiers, the preceding Sultans of Egypt had been accustomed to levy chosen troops from the numerous bands of slaves, whom they bought on the verge of Tartary, or in other foreign

countries. These, chiefly Georgians, Circassians, and the like, were selected while children, for their form and strength, carefully educated in martial exercises, and taught to understand from early years that their distinction in life must depend upon the undaunted use which they should learn to make of their spears and scimitars. They were allowed high pay and great privileges, and those who distinguished themselves were raised to the rank of officers over the others. From these chosen troops the sultan selected his vizirs, generals, lieutenants, and governors.

As has been always found the case in similar instances, this body of mercenary soldiers became dangerous even to the prince in whose service they were enrolled, and frequently assumed the right of disposing of the crown, which they were engaged to defend, as well as the life of him that wore it. It was they who, with such determined valour, had interrupted the advance, and followed up the retreat, of the valiant Franks; and, filled with a high idea of their own prowess, and a contempt of the native troops of the country, they thought that Touran Shah was not sufficiently grateful to them for the victory which he had obtained by their support, or that he manifested some intention of laying them aside for a more docile soldiery.

Of this unfortunate sultan we know little; but he appears neither to have been destitute of the bravery nor the generosity which became a descendant of Saladin. The valiant Sieur de Joinville saw him in the front of battle, taller by the

shoulders than those around him, and wielding with courage the German sword which he bore in his hand. His gilded helmet was placed proudly on his head; "and I never," says the historian, "saw a more gallant man under arms." Nor was his conduct less princely than his appearance. At first, indeed, the French in their captivity were threatened with a terrific death by torture, unless they would renounce the Christian faith to ensure their personal safety. Such a proposal, under such tremendous threats, was made to the King himself. But when Saint Louis showed by his firmness that he held such menaces in scorn, the Saracen Prince sent a message in a milder tone, demanding to know what ransom the captive monarch was willing to pay, in addition to the surrender of Damietta, which was stipulated as one indispensable condition of his freedom.

The King of France replied, that if a reasonable ransom were demanded, he would write to the Queen, who was still enclosed within the walls of Damietta, to pay it for him and for his army. The Saracens, whose manners permitted of no admission of women to their councils, asked with surprise to what purpose the Queen should be consulted in such an affair. "Have I not reason?" answered the simple-mannered and gallant-hearted Louis "is she not my wife and my companion?" A second message informed the captive Monarch that his ransom was fixed by the Sultan at a million of golden bezants,—equal, says Joinville, to five hundred thousand livres. At once, and without

attempting farther to chaffer upon the bargain, "I will cheerfully give," said Louis, "five hundred thousand livres for ransom of my army; and for my own I will surrender the town of Damietta to the Sultan; for my rank is too high to be valued in money." The Sultan was seized with a generous emulation. "He is a right generous Frank," said Touran Shah, "who does not cheapen our first offer like a merchant or pedlar; tell him I abate my demand one-fifth, and that four hundred thousand livres shall be a most sufficient ransom." He also sent garments for the King's use, and seemed disposed to part with him upon liberal terms.

But while Touran Shah was disposing of the fate of another, he was little aware how near he approached to his own. The discontent of his body-guard of slaves, then called Haleuca, and who were afterwards distinguished by the well-known name of Mamelukes, had risen to the highest. They broke out into insurrection, attacked the unfortunate Touran Shah, set fire to his pavilion, and cut his body in pieces.

Having committed this murder, they came before the King and the French captives, with their bloody battle-axes and sabres in their hands; "What wilt thou give to me," said the foremost assassin, who was yet streaming with the blood of Touran Shah, "who have slain the enemy that sought thy life?" To this Saint Louis returned no answer. The French knights confessed themselves to each other, expecting to be immediately massa-

cred. Yet in the very flushed moment of their Sultan's murder, and while seeming still greedy of more blood, the conspirators felt restraint from the dignified demeanour of their disarmed prisoner. They also remembered that Damietta still held a Christian garrison, which might give them trouble. Under such impressions, they showed indeed a disposition sufficiently mischievous, yet entered into new conditions, somewhat similar to those that had been prescribed by the murdered Touran Shah, but insisted that the King should take an oath, binding him to renounce his baptism and his faith, with the inestimable privileges purchased by them, in case he did not comply with all the articles of the treaty. Louis constantly and magnanimously answered, "he would rather die a good Christian, than live by taking the impious and sinful oath which they would force upon him." The Patriarch of Jerusalem, who was present at the moment, was immediately seized by the soldiers, and tied to a post, so tightly, that the blood sprung from his hands, while the old man, in agony, called upon the King to swear boldly whatever the infidels chose, since he would take the sin upon his own soul, rather than endure this horrid torture. But whether the oath was taken or not, Joinville declares he cannot tell.

In the mean time, the scene suddenly changed, as was not unnatural among such fickle and barbarous men. A mirthful sound of trumpets and kettle-drums was heard before the tent, and King Louis was presented with an invitation from the

chiefs of the late conspiracy, to become their sultan and sovereign, in room of the murdered Touran Shah. That such a proposal should be started, among other wild plans, by men in the condition of the Mamelukes, slaves, strangers, and foreigners, indifferent to the Mahometan religion, and impressed by the undaunted bravery of their royal captive, was not perhaps so unnatural as if it had been made elsewhere, or by others. But it does not seem to have been generally embraced, or seriously insisted on. On the contrary, some of the leading emirs were of opinion, that, to atone for the treasonable slaughter of Touran Shah, a good Mahometan, by their hands, it was their duty to put to death Saint Louis and his followers, the mortal enemies of Mahomet and his religion. At length, however, the proposition for mercy prevailed, and a treaty for ransom was carried into execution.

While these strange negotiations, if indeed they can be called such, were proceeding in this wild and uncertain manner, Joinville informs us of other circumstances respecting the Queen of France, who, as I before informed you, having accompanied her husband in this calamitous expedition, was enclosed with the remnant of the Crusaders in the fortress of Damietta. She was at that time with child; a circumstance adding much to the distress of her situation, during her husband's captivity, aggravated by the probability that she herself might fall into the hands of the victorious

infidels. Her period of confinement was now close approaching.

"Three days before she was brought to bed," says the faithful chronicler of the expedition, "she was informed that the good King her husband had been made prisoner, which so troubled her mind, that she seemed continually te see her chamber filled with Saracens, ready to slay her; and she incessantly kept crying, 'Help, help!' when there was not a soul near her. For fear the fruit of her womb should perish, she made a knight watch at the foot of her bed all night without sleeping. This person was very old, not less than eighty years, or perhaps more; and every time she screamed, he held her hands, and said, 'Madam, do not be thus alarmed; I am with you; quiet these fears.' Before the good lady was brought to bed, she ordered every person to leave her chamber, except this ancient knight, when she cast herself out of bed on her knees before him, and requested that he would grant her a boon. The knight, with an oath, promised compliance. The Queen then said, 'Sir knight, I request, on the oath you have sworn, that, should the Saracens storm this town and take it, you will cut off my head before they seize my person.' The knight replied, that he would cheerfully do so, and that he had before thought of it, in case such an event should happen. The Queen was, shortly after, delivered of a son in the town of Damietta, who was named John, and sirnamed Tristan (*i. e.* the *Sad*), because he had been born

in sadness and misery. The day he was born, it was told the Queen that the Pisans, the Genoese, and all the poorer European commonalty (sailors) that were in the town, were about to fly with their vessels, and leave the King. The Queen sent for them. 'Gentlemen,' she said, 'I beg of you, for the love of God, that you will not think of quitting this town; for you well know, if you do, that my Lord the King and his whole army will be ruined. At least, if such be your fixed determination, have pity on this wretched person who now lies in pain, and wait until she be recovered, before you put it in execution.'"

To give her solicitations greater effect, the Queen was obliged to purchase provisions to feed these wretched mariners, who complained that they must otherwise perish by hunger; and the sum so expended amounted to two hundred and sixty thousand livres, the difficulty of finding which was an augmentation of her distress.

In this manner, after suffering repeated hardships, Louis, his Queen, and his lords, were at length permitted to embark for Acre, at the head of the remnant of his army. During the passage thither, the King showed many marks of sorrow and dejection, the consequences no doubt of the unsatisfactory issue of his Crusade; his temper also became austere, and even gloomy, of which the following is an instance. At one time he enquired for his brother Charles, whom he accused of having avoided his presence, although they were both in the same galley. When Louis at length discovered

the Comte d'Anjou in the act of playing at tables with Sir Walter de Nemours, he staggered towards them, though scarcely able to stand from severe illness, seized the dice and tables, which he flung into the sea, and severely rebuked his brother for engaging in this trifling amusement, forgetful of the death of their brother, the Comte d'Artois, and of the extreme danger from which they had been providentially extricated. "But," says De Joinville, with some *naïveté*, "Sir Walter de Nemours suffered the most, for the King flung all the money that lay on the tables after them into the sea." When he had thus arrived on ground where he might consider himself as perfectly free, King Louis again became inspired with the desire of persisting in his Crusade. His two brothers, however, and a great number of the nobility, at this time returned to Europe. Louis himself remained four years longer in the East. The Christians, or Latins, of Syria, found it their interest to foster his enthusiasm by holding out remote and fanciful prospects of his receiving assistance. Louis was amused with wild stories of the Scheik, or Chief of the Assassins, who was supposed peculiarly friendly to the King of France, and of an imaginary prince, a Christian by profession, and a Tartar by birth, whom these times termed Prester John, and from whose ideal assistance Louis was taught to expect the means of retrieving his affairs. It was not so much, however, the fallacious hope of foreign and eastern assistance, as a sense of mortification as a devotee, and dishonour as a true knight,

which rendered Louis reluctant to return to his own kingdom, without having distinguished his arms in some victory against the Mahometans.

To pave the way for this much-desired object, Louis displayed great ability and diligence in allaying quarrels among the Christians in Palestine, for which he was admirably fitted by the native justice and benevolence of his character, and also in fortifying Acre, Cæsarea, Joppa, and other places of importance, and in preparing for a new war in Syria.

The immediate result of his labours was highly useful to Syria, insomuch that the King obtained the honourable title of Father of the Christians. But in acting towards these eastern Latins with wisdom and benevolence, Louis forgot that he owed a still more pressing duty to his own kingdom, where general confusion prevailed. For, while the King thus pleased his fancy by preparing for battles in Palestine that were never to be fought, the disorders occasioned by the news of his captivity had thrown all France into dismay. His mother, Queen Blanche, who acted as regent, had lost in some degree that strength and alertness of mind which distinguished her during her son's minority. Upon his departure from Marseilles, she had fainted on bidding him adieu, and could scarcely be recalled to life,—showing plainly that she was more deeply affected by her son's absence than gratified by her own elevation to authority When she received the melancholy tidings of Louis's

defeat and imprisonment, her sorrow seems to have weakened her understanding.

She suffered a wretched monk, somewhat resembling one of those fanatics who led the first expedition under Peter the Hermit, to gather together a rabble of the lowest rank, to whom he tried to preach a new crusade, for the purpose of effecting the liberation of the King. The disorderly vagabonds thus assembled, who lived at first upon alms, soon turned themselves to plunder, and gave rise to a civil war, in which they were at length defeated and extirpated by the forces of the Government, but not without much loss and confusion. This intestine disorder was likely to be increased by a war with England, upon the expiry of the truce between these countries.

A.D. 1251.

In the mean time Queen Blanche, the regent-mother, became altogether broken-hearted on hearing of her son's misfortunes, and retired into a convent, where she died of melancholy. Her death was naturally a subject of affliction to King Louis; but the young Queen Margaret, considering the terms on which she stood with her mother-in-law, could scarcely be supposed to share deeply in his affliction. On receiving these tidings, Louis yielded to necessity, and prepared to return to France with the remains of his army.

A.D. 1253.

When Louis arrived, after a voyage of ten weeks, upon the coast of Provence, he was persuaded with difficulty to land at Hieres, because that port was

not in his own dominions. He yielded, however, in consideration of the illness of the ladies, and once more, with diminished forces, A.D. 1254. and somewhat of a tarnished reputation, resumed possession of his kingdom. His melancholy countenance, which bore deep marks of dejection, and the plainness of his dress, in which he never assumed royal splendour, implied how much he had suffered since his departure, both in mind and body.

CHAPTER XIV.

Wise and peaceful Reign of Saint Louis—his Expedition against Tunis, and Death—The Kingdom of the Two Sicilies given by the Pope to Charles of Anjou, brother of Saint Louis—Arrival of Charles before Tunis, with reinforcements—Treaty with the King of Tunis—the Crusade abandoned—Vigorous Administration of Philip the Hardy—his Second Marriage—The Queen accused by her husband's Favourite of poisoning her Stepson—she is acquitted, and the Favourite disgraced and executed—Wars to decide the possession of the Crown of the Two Sicilies—The Sicilian Vespers—Philip's unsuccessful attempt to take possession of the Kingdom of Arragon—his Death.

[1254—1285.]

King Louis, upon his return to France, manifested the same prudence, wisdom, and judgment in his measures, which he had shown in Syria to less effectual purpose. He hastened to make peace with England, in consideration of which he received Henry III. at Paris with sumptuous hospitality. The claims of England upon Normandy were now rather antiquated. "I would willingly restore the province," said the King of France to the English Monarch, in a confidential manner, "but my peers and barons will not consent to my doing so." King Henry therefore exchanged his claims on Normandy, Anjou, Touraine, and Poi-

tou, for some trifling territories adjacent to Gascony, the only portion of Henry II.'s French dominions which his grandson still retained.

Louis now reigned in peace and honour. From the universal confidence reposed in his justice and equity, both his own subjects and strangers were frequently in the custom of referring to him matters which were in debate between them. This course was the more resorted to, as the good King frequently indemnified at his own expense the party against whom he gave his award. Thus, when the Queen's mother, the Countess of Provence, disputed the right of some castles with the King's brother, the Count of Anjou, Louis decreed that they should be purchased by the latter from the Count of Provence, but at the same time gave his brother money to pay the price. In any dispute with the crown, the opposite party found it most advantageous to trust the candour of the King himself, who always judged his own side of the cause with the greatest severity. Thus this good King gained the hearts of the insurbordinate vassals who had often conspired against his predecessors.

This able Prince was farther distinguished as a legislator, in which capacity, the manners and customs of that age being considered, he makes a distinguished figure in French history, and may fairly be preferred to any sovereign who at that time flourished in Europe. In particular, he endeavoured to maintain the tranquillity of the kingdom, by the suppression of the numerous private quarrels among

the great vassals of the crown, and greatly curbed the right which they assumed of taking the field like independent sovereigns, as had been formerly their custom. These great lords, overawed by the reputation and power of the King, were now, generally, compelled to bring their contests before his tribunal, instead of deciding them by arms.

Saint Louis also laid under restrictions the trial by single combat, at least as much as the manners of the time, partial to that species of decision, would permit the alteration.

By these and other enactments, Saint Louis studied to make his people happy, while his own demeanour indicated too fully that he had at his heart the rooted feeling of having sustained discomfiture and disgrace in Egypt, where he had most hoped to deserve success, and to acquire glory. His robes of ceremony were laid aside, and he seldom shared personally in the banquets which he provided for his courtiers and nobles. The French King was, for humility's sake, attended, even at meals, by troops of beggars, to whom he distributed provisions with his own royal hand. There was something of affectation in this; but the principle on which he acted, seems, from other circumstances, to have been sincere.

His desire for the general peace of Europe, and his efforts to appease the quarrels of the great, incurred the censure of some of his statesmen, who wished to persuade him that he would act with more policy by suffering their discords to augment, and even by aggravating their quarrels, than

by endeavouring to end them. To such advisers, Louis, in that case justly deserving the epithet of Saint, used to reply, "they counselled him ill; for," added he, "should the neighbouring princes and great barons perceive that I instigated wars amongst them, or at least that I did not labour to restore peace, they might well imagine that I acted thus either through malevolence or indifference —an idea which would be sure to tempt them to enter into dangerous confederacies against me; besides that, in acting otherwise than I do, I should provoke the indignation of God, who has written in his Gospel, 'Blessed are the peace-makers, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.'" In like manner, his advisers upbraided him that he neglected to take advantage of the weakness of Henry III., to wrest from the English the considerable share which they still retained of the French territory in Gascony. On this subject, also, he defended himself by proving that an honest and upright conduct was the best policy which a King could observe; "he was aware," he said, "that John of England had justly forfeited the greater part of his dominions in France; nor did he meditate the extravagant generosity of restoring them to his son On the other hand, he felt himself obliged to abstain from coveting that portion to which Henry retained a legal right through his grandmother Eleanor."

While thus behaving with moderation and generosity to his neighbours, and even to his enemies, Louis performed in his own person the duty of a

judge, and was often found, like the Kings of Judah, sitting in the gates of his palace, to render justice indifferently to all who presented themselves to ask it of him.

By his attention to the public good, as well in making laws as in enforcing them, the King became deservedly beloved, and proved effectually that no subtleties of worldly policy could carry an empire to such a height of peace and happiness, as the generous and worthy conduct of a prince acting upon religious and moral principles.

While there was so much of excellence in the character and conduct of St Louis, he was subject, as we have already hinted, to a strain of superstition, the great vice of the age, which impelled him into measures that finally brought ruin upon himself, and severe losses upon the state. At the bottom of his thoughts, he still cherished the hope of being more successful in a new crusade than in that in which he had encountered defeat and captivity; and after sixteen years had been devoted to the improvement and good government of his own dominions, he again prepared a fleet and army to invade the territories of a Mahometan prince. Neither Palestine nor Egypt was the object of this new attack. The city of Tunis, upon the coast of Africa, was the destined object of the expedition. Credulous in all that flattered his ruling passion, Louis had persuaded himself that the Mahometan King of Tunis would turn Christian on his appearance, and become his ally, or vassal; and, by possessing a powerful influence, through the occupation of this

fertile country, he hoped he should make the conversion of this prince the means of pushing his conquests, and extending Christianity over Egypt and Palestine also.

It was in the year 1270, that he gave the final proof that his superstition was as active and as credulous as ever. He carried A.D. 1270. with him, as before, the princes of his own family, and many of his principal vassals. The most remarkable of these, both by merit and rank, was Edward, Prince of Wales, who seized that opportunity to exhibit against the infidels fresh proofs of the courage and military conduct which he had displayed in his own country during the civil conflicts called the Barons' Wars. He was followed by a body of select troops, and distinguished himself greatly.

This expedition, which formed the eighth, and proved the last crusade, was in its outset assailed by a tempest, by which the fleet, ill constructed to encounter storms, sustained great loss. In three days, however, Louis assembled the greater part of his armament before Tunis. Here the infidel monarch, whom he had hoped to convert to the Christian religion, instead of showing the expected docility, received him at the head of a strong army, with which he prepared to defend his city against the invaders. Louis immediately landed; and the French, in their disembarkation, obtained some successes. These, however, were only momentary, for the crusaders had no sooner formed a close siege around the town, which was too strong to be

carried save by blockade, than diseases of a destructive character broke out in their army. The want of water and forage increased the progress of contagion; and constant skirmishing with the enemy, for which the Moors chose the most advantageous positions, added the waste of the sword to that of epidemic disease. The infection approached the person and family of the King; his younger son, John Tristan, Count of Nevers, was one of the first to fall a victim, and his eldest son, Philip, and his brother Alphonso, now Count of Toulouse, narrowly escaped a similar fate. Louis himself, attacked by the same fever, called to his pillow Philip, his eldest remaining son, and exhausted what remained of life and strength in giving him his parting instructions.

On the 25th of August, 1270, this good King died, to whose reign one only misfortune attached, namely, that too little of it was spent in the bosom of his own kingdom, and in attention to its interests, which he understood so well. But France, so populous and powerful a nation, speedily recovered the loss incurred by the unfortunate crusades, while the effect of the wise laws introduced by Saint Louis continued to influence his kingdom through a long train of centuries.

A.D. 1270.

Mean time, Charles, Count of Anjou, the brother of Saint Louis, had obtained a crown for his own brow, which he had hoped to render yet more stable, had his brother succeeded in the expedition against Tunis, to which attempt he was preparing

to bring him assistance. To understand this important point of history, it is necessary to look a little back.

The Emperor Frederick II. had been heir to the pretensions of the imperial house of Suabia, or Hohenstauffen, to both the Sicilies; in other words, to those territories now belonging to the kingdom of Naples. But over these kingdoms the Popes had always asserted a right of homage, similar to that which King John surrendered to the church in England. Upon the death of Frederick, these Italian and Sicilian dominions were usurped by his natural son, Manfred, to the prejudice of the Emperor's nephew and lawful heir, a youth named Conradin. Manfred exercised with vigour the rights which he had so boldly assumed. To the real dominions of Naples and Sicily, he added a nominal claim over the kingdom of Jerusalem, though long since conquered by the Saracens. In assuming these titles, Manfred disowned all homage to the Pope; he even invaded the territories of the Church, when the Pontiff disputed his title. Pope Urban, who then wore the mitre, together with Clement IV., his successor, who adhered to his policy, began successively to use their spiritual weapons. They excommunicated Manfred, and were only at a loss upon whom to confer the kingdom of the Two Sicilies, of which they deprived him by the formal sentence of the church. This was a difficult matter; for, though the Popes claimed the privilege of conferring the right on whom they pleased, it was necessary to choose a candidate

strong enough to cope with Manfred; and it was not easy to find such a one. In this uncertainty, the sovereignty was offered first to one of Saint Louis's children, but declined by the good King, who regarded it as inconsistent with morality to profit by a forfeiture, which, though declared by the voice of the church, had not been incurred by the legitimate heir. Conradin's right, it was clear, could not be affected by the acts of Manfred's usurped government. The Pope next applied to Edmund, son of the King of England. But although this Prince accepted the offer, and went so far as to assume the title, his father, Henry III., was too much embarrassed with the wars of his barons at home, to enable him to support his son on a foreign throne.

At length the Pope addressed himself to Charles, Count of Anjou, the brother of Saint Louis, a man of a bold, and even ferocious character, one who would act with sufficient vigour, and without embarrassing himself with any scruples, in defence of the right assigned him by the Pope. Saint Louis acquiesced in the nomination of his brother, though he had declined to profit by the grant to his sons. And although his royal brother was rather passive than active in his favour, the Count of Anjou was able to assemble an army competent to the enterprise. He marched into the Neapolitan territory, and engaged Manfred in a pitched battle, fought near Beneventum, in which the latter lost his kingdom and his life.

A.D. 1266.

Another competitor now appeared in the person

of Conradin, nephew of the Emperor Frederick, the legitimate heir to the throne. This young prince had little difficulty in assembling a strong party, consisting of the friends of the imperial faction, which in the beginning threatened to extinguish the rising power of Charles of Anjou. The valour, or the fortune of the latter was, however, once more predominant. Conradin was defeated by Charles in a great battle, made prisoner, and, by an act of gross injustice and cruelty, tried, and put to death upon a scaffold, for the prosecution of a claim of succession to which he was alike called by justice and by nature. A.D. 1268.

When, therefore, the rash expedition of Louis against Tunis took place, Charles, now King of Sicily, was eager in encouraging his brother to a war in which he thought less of the conquest of the Holy Land, than of subjecting Tunis to European dependence, and making it an appanage of his own kingdom of the Two Sicilies. A.D. 1270.

When the eighth Crusade had nearly come to a melancholy termination, by the death of St Louis and his relations, Charles, King of the Sicilies, appeared before Tunis with a fleet loaded with provisions and reinforcements. As the fresh troops advanced to support the siege, the Moors checked their approach by putting in motion the sands of the desert, which, driven by a violent wind upon the strangers, prevented their attempts to march up to the attack of the place. Upon a second occasion of the same kind, however, the natives were less suc-

cessful, being drawn into an ambuscade, where they suffered severely by the swords of the Europeans. The King of Tunis began to propose terms of submission, offering to pay a ransom to the King of the Sicilies of forty thousand crowns a-year—to defray the expenses of the war—to allow the preaching of Christian priests, and the exercise of the Christian religion in his dominions, with some other concessions, which, excepting the payment of the money, were rather nominal than real. Notwithstanding these favourable conditions, the French and Sicilian monarchs were blamed by the voice of Christendom—Philip for impatience, and Charles for covetousness, in accepting them. Of all the princes in the crusade, however, Edward of England, one of the most politic princes who ever lived, was the only one who refused his consent to this treaty. He also professed his determination to proceed to Palestine, where Acre, the last of the fortresses which owned the Christian authority, was on the point of surrender to the infidels. "I will enter Acre," said young Edward, striking his breast, "though only Fowin my groom should follow me!" He went forward accordingly with his little band of English; but the feats which he performed were of small note, considering the personal qualities of the Prince, and his expedition is chiefly famed for the romantic courage of his princess Eleanor, who attended him. This faithful and courageous lady is said to have sucked the wound which her husband received from an envenomed weapon, and to have thus endanger-

ed her own life to save his. After the treaty of Tunis had been concluded, the Kings of France and Sicily returned to their dominions—Philip eager to take possession of the crown which had fallen to him by inheritance, Charles desirous to secure and to enjoy that which he had obtained by conquest.

Philip, the third of that name, called the Hardy, seems to have been disposed to distinguish himself by enforcing the wise laws of King Louis, his father, for preventing private wars among his vassals. He had soon an opportunity to show this disposition, in the manner he acted in a quarrel between the Count of Foix and some of his vassals. The King espoused the cause of the latter, and at the head of his royal forces, besieged the castle of Foix, compelled the Count to surrender, detained him a certain time in prison, and only dismissed him upon complete submission. The vigour of the government upon this occasion shows the permanent result of the just and firm conduct of Saint Louis. But the King's most remarkable adventures occurred in his own family, and were of a very distressing nature.

In his return from the crusade through Italy, King Philip had the misfortune to lose his beautiful wife, Isabel of Aragon, who had not hesitated to follow him to the melancholy crusade in which the royal family sustained so much loss. In the course of this journey, the Queen, being then near her confinement, was thrown from her horse in crossing a river, and died in consequence. Isabel,

thus untimely cut off, left four sons; Louis, who died suddenly; Philip, who reigned after his father; Charles of Valois, father of the branch from whom sprung the French kings of that house; and Robert, who died young.

After the King's return to France, the council remonstrated with him on the inexpediency of his remaining single, and he was induced to
A.D. 1274. marry, as his second wife, Mary the daughter of Henry, the sixth Duke of Brabant. The life of this unfortunate Princess was rendered melancholy, and that of her husband disturbed, by a strange succession of misfortunes, in consequence of the machinations of an unworthy favourite. Mary of Brabant bore a son the year after her marriage, and within six years afterwards, two daughters; a fair lineage, which naturally confirmed the love which the King bore to her, as a beautiful and affectionate woman. But jealousy and discord were sown between them. The artificer of this mischief was Pierre de la Brosse; he was a person of low origin, and had appeared at court originally in the capacity of a barber. By this, however, we are not to infer the degree of ignorance or meanness which moderns annex to the word. A barber in those times received a medical education, and was in effect a surgeon, applying his skill to the cure of wounds, as well as to the arrangement of the beard and hair. Still, however, it was a menial office, and it was thought wonderful that such a man should rise to be a royal favourite. Upon the death of Saint Louis, Philip

advanced La Brosse, who seems to have been a man of talent as well as skill, to the rank of royal chamberlain, and employed him in the administration of some important affairs. He is said, as often happens with upstart favourites, to have abused the King's kindness, and betrayed his trust, using his favour as the means of unjust oppression. A natural dislike arose between the Queen, who thought her husband trusted too much to this unworthy man, and the favourite, who foresaw his own ruin in the predominant influence of the royal consort. La Brosse, having once entertained this jealousy of the Queen, is said to have taken every opportunity to prejudice Philip against her, by intimating, from time to time, that his consort was actuated by the general dislike against Philip's children by his former marriage, commonly imputed to stepmothers. The favourite caused it to be insinuated, from various quarters, into the King's private ear, that his wife often complained of her misfortune in bearing children who were destined to become the vassals of those of the first marriage, and that she said their case was the harder, if, though born when their father was upon the throne, they must neces sarily be postponed to the children who came into the world when Philip was only a Prince.

About this time, Louis, the King's eldest son by his first marriage, and heir to the throne, was seized suddenly by a malignant fever, which hurried him to his grave. The fatal disorder was attended with violent derangement in his stomach, livid spots upon his person, A.D. 1276.

and other symptoms, which the age ascribed to poison. On these suspicious circumstances, La Brosse, who had the court filled with his relations and dependents, spread rumours tending to fix the crime upon Queen Mary, whom he had already loaded with calumnies to the same effect. The Queen, on the contrary, accused La Brosse of having himself administered the poison to the young Prince, with the purpose of charging it against her. The King, divided betwixt fondness for his wife, and habitual partiality for his favourite, did not well know, betwixt two averments both abhorrent to his imagination, which of them to believe. Perhaps, in so dark a transaction, we may be justified in believing that no crime at all was committed, and that what were considered as marks of poison, were merely symptoms of a putrid fever. The public in all ages, however, have shown an extreme readiness to impute to violent causes the sudden death of great personages.

The King, in his distress and perplexity, had recourse to a mode of solving his doubts suited only to an ignorant age. He despatched the Bishop of Bayeux, and the Abbot of St Denis, to visit a nun, or beguine, then at Nivelles, who was supposed to possess the gift of prophecy, and to have revelations from heaven, for the purpose of learning from her the real cause of the young Prince's death. Her first communication made to the Bishop of Bayeux alone, under the seal of confession, was of an ambiguous kind. This was thought suspicious, because the Bishop, being a

near connexion of La Brosse, was supposed to be interested in obtaining a declaration favourable to his relation. But whatever his secret bias was, the prelate refused to bring forward a charge founded on what the nun had told him in confession. The prophetess herself seemed equally unwilling to speak plain. To a second enquiry by the Abbot of St Denis, after that by the Bishop of Bayeux, she refused to answer; and the matter seemed to go against the Queen. But in this uncertainty Philip deputed the Bishop of Dol, and Arnolph of Oursmale, a knight Templar, who were considered as impartial persons, to examine the nun a second time. To them she frankly declared, that the King ought not to give any credit to such accusations as might be brought against his wife, since they all arose out of calumny.

Two years afterwards, the favourite was arrested and put in prison, in consequence of the alleged discovery of some letters sealed with his seal, and afterwards brought before a commission, consisting of four princes, of whom the Queen's brother was one, and the Count of Artois, La Brosse's personal enemy, another. The contents of the letters, and the accusation supposed to be founded on them, were never made public; the commission, however, found him guilty, and he was afterwards ignominiously executed. The Duke of Brabant had gained credit for the part he had hitherto taken in his sister's favour; but when the French saw La Brosse put to death without an open trial, and beheld the Duke of Brabant, and

A.D. 1278.

some lords of his party, witnesses of, and exulting in his execution, with more personal feeling of vengeance than became their rank, the tide began to turn, and La Brosse was considered as having fallen a victim to the Queen's enmity. His brother-in-law, the Bishop of Bayeux, immediately fled to Rome, and placed himself under the Pope's protection. The King sent an embassy to his Holiness, to require the deposition and punishment of the Bishop; the Pope absolutely declined to do either, from a belief of his innocence. The Bishop remained at Rome until the King's death, and then returned quietly to his see. Mary, however, long survived her husband, and was always treated with the greatest respect by the family of his former wife.

The affairs of England, and of Italy, were the next objects of importance during Philip the Hardy's reign.

It was while this King filled the throne that the English began again to be heard of in France, having been long of little consequence there, owing to the violence of their domestic feuds. Edward I. had hitherto been sufficiently busied in reducing his subjects of England to obedience, but, having perfectly succeeded, became now desirous of asserting his claim to such of the English territories in France as could yet be gathered out of the wreck of the forfeiture declared by Philip Augustus. For this purpose Edward resided three years in France, from June 1286, to August 1289. He rendered homage to Philip the Hardy, and tran-

sacted his affairs with great wisdom, honour, and success.

The bloody wars which long deluged Europe with slaughter, in order to decide the possession of Naples and Sicily, continued to agitate France during this reign. Charles of Anjou, the actual monarch, did not, by any means, sit secure on the throne he had conquered. He had involved himself in an imprudent quarrel with the Church, to which he originally owed his kingdom. Pope Nicolas III., who bore much ill will towards Charles, deprived him of the office of Vicar of the Empire, and the dignity of Roman Senator, in the hope, it is supposed, of provoking him to some act which might give the Holy See a pretence for depriving him of the kingdom of Naples and Sicily, which she had bestowed.

The vices of that Prince were yet more hurtful to him than the displeasure of the Pope; and the luxury, insolence, and cruelty, by which his French troops provoked the general resentment of the Sicilians, were still more fatal to his cause. A rival soon arose when his reign became unpopular. The imperialists still retained a strong party among the Sicilians. Don Pedro, King of Arragon—who had married the daughter of Manfred, defeated and slain by Charles of Anjou—now claimed the kingdom of Sicily in the right of his wife, and threatened to reconquer it from the French. The passions of the inhabitants seconded, in an extraordinary manner, the pretensions of Don Pedro. Smarting under the oppressive government of

Charles, and incensed at the liberties which the French unceremoniously took with the females of their families, the Sicilians formed a scheme of insurrection against these petulant and insolent strangers, equally remarkable for its extent, the secrecy with which it was carried on, and the number of Frenchmen who perished.

This was the famous insurrection, known by the name of the Sicilian Vespers, which was carried into effect at Palermo on the 30th of March, 1282. This plot was contrived with such surprising secrecy and unanimity, and executed with such general fury, that in less than two hours a general massacre had taken place, of all the French, whatever their age, sex, or condition. The example of the capital was eagerly followed by the other towns and places in the island, so that, by the end of April, Sicily was entirely rid of its French invaders. In this massacre, priests slew each other upon the very altar; fathers killed their daughters, who had been married to French husbands, and every other horror took place, which could be practised by a nation taking vengeance, as one man, on the oppressors to whom they had so long been subject.

A.D. 1282.

This massacre, intended to be decisive of the contest between Anjou and Arragon, was like many other great historical crimes, disappointing in its results. The kingdom of France was thrilled with horror, but at the same time seized with a thirst of revenge for so general and dreadful an assassination. Numbers of the best warriors in

that kingdom offered their services to Charles of Anjou, to avenge the death of their murdered countrymen. Pedro of Arragon, finding his adherents unable to cope with the high-famed French chivalry, was reduced to evade the combat, by a device, the issue of which considerably hurt his reputation. In order to get rid of the pressure of the French force in Sicily, and to avoid the necessity of encountering the numerous aud excellent forces which had come to support their cause, Pedro despatched a challenge to Charles of Anjou, defying him to meet him with a hundred knights, and decide their differences by the issue of that encounter. Bourdeaux, as a neutral territory, was assigned as the place of combat. Charles, who was by no means deficient in personal courage, immediately accepted the defiance, and went to the place appointed with his hundred attendants. In this he acted imprudently, considering that, by prosecuting the advantages he possessed, he might have made himself master of Sicily, which was the object of contention; an opportunity which was lost by his departure for Bourdeaux. Neither did Pedro ever mean actually to encounter him and his knights, as his challenge implied. He indeed kept his appointment; but he appeared in disguise, and avoided the combat, alleging, that, as Philip, King of France, was present in Bourdeaux at the time, and was lord paramount of the town, it was no longer an equal place of meeting for a Prince who came to fight with that King's uncle. Accordingly, he left the place with little honour;

for, as Philip had few or no soldiers along with him, the seneschal of the King of England, who was actually commandant of the place, was sufficiently strong to have afforded a fair field of combat, both to French and Spaniards. But Pedro obtained his object, which was the opportunity to prosecute the war in Sicily, with a better chance of success than when he had Charles himself for an opponent.

Charles of Anjou had left his son, Charles, Prince of Salerno, as his substitute in the government of Naples during his absence, with strict orders on no account to leave Naples, or to risk an engagement until his father's return. Provoked, however, by the appearance of the enemy's fleet in the bay, which had just achieved a victory over one of Charles's squadrons at Malta, the young Prince, attended by his bravest nobles, embarked on board the gallies lying in the harbour, and proceeded to give battle to the united Sicilian and Arragonese fleet, commanded by Roger de Loria, the most celebrated naval commander of that day. The result was most unfortunate. The Neapolitan fleet was defeated and entirely destroyed; the Prince of Salerno, and most of the nobles, taken prisoners.

A.D. 1285. King Charles himself, at first seeming to support the calamity with firmness, finally sank under it, and died within six months afterwards.

In the mean time, the King of France, to whom the Pope, according to his custom of dealing kingdoms at pleasure, had assigned that of Arragon, transferable to any of his sons whom he should

name, conveyed the right thus vested in him to his third son, Charles of Valois, and prepared, with a strong army and navy, to put him in possession of his new dominions.

With this purpose, King Philip the Hardy invaded Catalonia, and besieged Gerona. Pedro of Arragon came to its relief, with a small and flying army. The war was carried on with great ferocity and barbarity on both sides; but although Philip succeeded, after a two months' siege, in taking Gerona, this advantage was so greatly counterbalanced by the losses which he sustained both by land and sea, and by a mortality which broke out in his army, that, within a fortnight afterwards, he was fain to make a precipitate retreat into his own kingdom. He recrossed the Pyrenees on the 1st of October, 1285, not as he had passed them three months before, on horseback, surrounded by warriors, at the head of a powerful army, and in all the pride of a conqueror, but carried in a litter, labouring under a fever, surrounded with courtiers, ill, like himself, and followed by the disheartened remnant of his forces. Philip himself only lived to reach Perpignan five days afterwards; and the surrender of Gerona, within a week of his death, left the French not one inch of ground in a kingdom, of the conquest of which they had made themselves secure.

The year 1285 was rendered memorable by the removal from the world of nearly all the princes who had been engaged either as principals or accessaries in this war between France and Spain.

Charles of Anjou, who first provoked it, died in January; Pope Martin III., who preached the crusade for its conquest, in March; Philip of France, in October; and, finally, Don Pedro himself closed the list in November.

The character of Philip III. was not distinguished by any shining qualities, and his reign presents an unfavourable contrast in all respects to that of either his father and predecessor, St Louis, or of his son and successor, Philip Le Bel.

CHAPTER XV.

Accession of Philip the Fair—Claim of England to the Province of Xaintonge—War between France and England—Edward I. prevented by his Scottish Wars from carrying it on with vigour—Confederacy of Continental Princes against Philip, instigated by Edward—Peace and mutual Alliance between France and England—Philip's Quarrel with Pope Boniface—his good understanding with the two succeeding Popes, who fix their Residence at Avignon—Contest with Flanders—Dissolution of the Order of Knights Templars—Death of Philip the Fair, and accession of Louis Hutin—Execution of Marigny, the Favourite of the deceased Monarch, for alleged Embezzlement and Sorcery—Marriage and Death of Louis Hutin—Accession of Philip the Long, by virtue of the Salic Law, to the exclusion of his Niece, the Princess Joan, daughter of Louis Hutin—Massacre of Jews and Lepers, in consequence of a suspicion that they had caused an Epidemic Disease throughout France, by poisoning the Wells—Death of Philip, and Accession of his Brother, Charles the Fair—Charles summons Edward II. to do Homage for his French Possessions—Investiture granted to the Prince of Wales, instead of his Father—Intrigues of Edward's Queen, Isabel, at the French Court—Death of Charles the Fair, and extinction of the First Line of Hugo Capet.

[1285—1327.]

PHILIP IV., surnamed *Le Bel*, or the Fair, from the beauty of his countenance, and the majesty of

his person, was only seventeen years old when he succeeded to the crown. He was married to Joan, who was Queen of Navarre, as well as Countess of Champagne and Brie.

This Prince's entrance on life took place at great disadvantage. His father had left an exhausted exchequer, and a ruinous and unsuccessful war undertaken with Spain, to vindicate the rights of his nephew, son of his sister Blanche, Queen of Castile, and to conquer the kingdom of Arragon for Charles of Valois. Edward I., too, was now beginning to bestir himself in France, and perplexed the French King by a demand of the territory of Xaintonge, a district adjacent to the English possessions in Guienne. To this demand Philip, after examining the ancient treaties between the kingdoms, saw the necessity of acquiescing, and Edward became a party to a negotiation by which the quarrel with Castile was accommodated, and the peace of Europe in a great measure restored.

A.D. 1292. But in consequence of an accidental quarrel between a Norman and a Gascon sailor, which led to a battle betwixt their two vessels, that moderation which the young King of France had hitherto exhibited, seemed to be exchanged for hasty resentment, and a determination to proceed to extremities.

Upon this accidental provocation, and in resentment of the injury offered to his flag, the King of France issued a summons, commanding Edward, as a peer of France, to appear before the French parliament, under pain of forfeiting his fiefs in that

kingdom. Edward, though offended at such peremptory conduct, was desirous to avoid a rupture. He offered, with exemplary forbearance, to yield to the French six castles which he held in Guienne, by way of security that he would submit to make amends, should he be found ultimately in the wrong, and also as pledges that he would meet the King of France, and discuss their difference in an amicable conference. At the same time, Edward stipulated that the summons, a proceeding offensive to his dignity, should be withdrawn. Philip having solemnly agreed to this arrangement, broke through it nevertheless in a faithless manner. He took possession of the six fortresses, but only made use of them to facilitate the conquest of the English province of Gascony, for which purpose he marched an army into that territory. A French fleet and flying army was even employed to attack the coasts of England, by which Dover was burnt, and Kent invaded.

Notwithstanding these provocations, which were not of a kind to be endured by a monarch of Edward's temper, he was extremely unwilling to engage in a war with France at that moment. He had been anxiously employed during the last years of the thirteenth century, in the unjust attempt to possess himself of the sovereignty of Scotland; in which he seemed often almost successful, but could never become completely so. Indeed, divided and dispirited as the kingdom then was, nothing was more easy than to overpower the Scots in the field; and yet such was the obstinacy of their resistance,

that within a month or two after their subjugation appeared to be complete, the natives of this pertinacious country were again in arms. It would have well suited the policy of Edward to have postponed all other wars, until he had completed the conquest of Scotland, and for this purpose he was loath to accept of the various provocations which France seemed studiously to offer to him. Nevertheless, as King of England, he could not, without dishonour, submit to the affront of being summoned before the French parliament, and he was also nettled at the unworthy manner in which he had been cheated in the matter of Guienne, and at the loss he had sustained in that province. He therefore returned an answer of defiance to King Philip, and sent a small army, under his brother Edmund, to protract the war in France, at as little risk as might be, while he himself marched into Scotland, to finish his conquest of that country.

It may be here remarked, first, That the grievances which Edward I. inflicted on Scotland, and by which he hoped to compel the people to rebellion, so as to form an excuse for confiscating and depriving of his kingdom, John Baliol, a monarch of his own creating, were very closely allied to the indignities which he himself experienced from the King of France, and to which he was personally so sensitive. Therefore the monarch, who exercised the same feudal tyranny towards others, his own dependents, could not with justice complain of similar usage from his own lord paramount.

To understand this, you must remember, that,

by unfairly availing himself of the trust reposed in him by the Scots, who chose him to be umpire for deciding the succession to their crown, Edward I. had assumed to himself, on very iniquitous grounds, the right and dignity of lord paramount of Scotland. Invested thus, though by no fair means, with the right of supremacy over that kingdom, Edward's next step was to summon John Baliol, the shadow whom he had set up as King, to attend and answer the complaints of the most insignificant persons who chose to bring an appeal from his decisions to the English courts of law in Westminster. Edward's object in this injurious conduct was undoubtedly to mortify the pride of the Scots and of their King, and to seek an opportunity of declaring, as he afterwards did, that the kingdom of Scotland was forfeited to himself.

Now, this was exactly, though in a less flagrant degree, the conduct of the King of France towards Edward himself, when he summoned him to attend before a court of French peers, and give satisfaction for a brawl which had taken place between a Gascon and a Norman vessel. It is no wonder, therefore, that Edward rather chose to stifle the debate, by the surrender of the six forts in Guienne, than to fix the attention of the world upon the very different light in which he regarded such treatment, when applied to himself, compared with that in which he chose to consider it, when used by him towards the King of Scotland.

It is also worthy of observation, that although the Scottish historians, in their zeal for their na-

tional antiquity, have pretended that a league existed between a Scottish King, whom they call Achaius, and the Emperor Charlemagne, as early as the year 779, and even affirm that the Emperor bestowed upon the northern prince a tressure of fleurs-de-lis, as an augmentation of arms, it is yet easy to demonstrate that there were no armorial bearings till long after the time of Charlemagne, and that the intimate league between France and Scotland did not exist, until the circumstances of both countries recommended mutual support and good understanding betwixt them, as a matter alike politic and necessary. We shall hereafter see that the Scottish alliance was of considerably more importance to France, than that of France was to Scotland. It was certainly renewed during the reign of Philip the Fair.

A.D. 1295.

To return to the general subject. Edward I. was induced to trust to some future favourable opportunity the prosecution of his revenge against France, into which he did not think it politic, or find it possible, to lead a large army, while embarrassed with the Scottish campaigns. In the month of August, 1297, however, it seemed to him that Scotland was so effectually pacified, as to permit a great effort for the chastisement of France. For this object, Edward trusted less to his own forces, though he transported to Flanders a gallant army of English, than to a general confederacy which he formed with several princes, on the same plan with the alliance so abruptly dissolved by Philip Augustus at the battle of Bouvines. The allies,

too, were nearly the same persons, being the Emperor of Germany, the Dukes of Austria and Brabant, the Earl of Flanders, and other German and Flemish princes, who engaged, for considerable sums of money to be paid by the King of England, to assemble a combined army for the invasion of France.

Philip was sufficiently alarmed by this formidable confederacy, but soon contrived to break it up by intrigues and distributing large sums among its members. Against Pierre de Dampierre alone, the aged Earl of Flanders, that King retained an embittered and vindictive spirit, and when the other princes had, in a great measure, been induced to abandon the confederacy by the means we have stated, Philip moved against that prince with a predominant force. At the same time, he put in motion the numerous malecontents whom he had found in the great towns of Flanders, the inhabitants of which were extremely mutinous, and disposed to insurrection. By the accumulated weight of foreign invasion and domestic insurrection, the earl was likely to be totally ruined, had not Edward of England hastened to his assistance with a fleet and army, and saved him from the revenge of France.

No battle of consequence, however, ensued. Edward was disgusted with the great expense which he had bestowed, to no purpose, upon his German confederates; and Philip, who had encountered more difficulties than he had expected in his campaign in Flanders, was also desirous of an accommo-

dation. A mutual friend to both monarchs offered his services as mediator. This was Charles II. King of Naples, called Charles the Lame. He was cousin-german to the King of France, being son of his uncle, Charles of Anjou To Edward he was bound by an important obligation. Charles had been taken, as we have said, by Roger de Loria, in a naval engagement, in which the Arragonese party were victorious. The victors manifested a strong inclination to put the captive prince to death, in their desire to revenge the execution of Conradin by his father. But Edward I., who entertained a personal friendship for this Prince, prevailed upon his captors to ransom him, and furnished the greater part of the money which was demanded upon the occasion. Thus was Charles the Lame well suited for a mediator between France and England, in which he made considerable progress, although the office was afterwards transferred to the reigning Pope, whose feelings towards France were not of the most amicable character.

Boniface VIII. was at this time the head of the church, and he had, some considerable time before, entered into a quarrel with Philip the Fair, respecting various extravagant claims which the Pope had preferred over the French King and his territories. The particulars of this feud between the most Christian King and the Church, are too long and complicated to be entered into in this place; but it terminated in an unusual manner, considering how successful the Church had hitherto been

in its most extravagant demands. The Pope was admitted as mediator between the two Kings, instead of the King of Sicily, and discharged his duty with considerable fairness. Notwithstanding which, they took the wise resolution of settling their differences by a definitive treaty; because, from the grasping temper of Boniface, he was the object of suspicion to them both. Matters were accordingly brought to a settlement. Edward made his homage for Gascony, and France and England entered into a mutual alliance against any one who should disturb the one King or the other in their rights, franchises, and freedoms, by which agreement the probability of a quarrel with their mediator the Pope was intimated. A.D 1299.

Boniface resumed his attacks against Philip. He attempted to fix upon him a certain Bernard de Saisset, for whom, without the King's consent, he had created a bishopric. He sent this man to Philip in the character of his legate, and Philip, in requital, turned him out of his dominions. The Pope next convened a council at Rome, at which several of the French clergy attended. Matters were thus brought to extremity. In a word, Boniface had already made public his determination to excommunicate the King of France, and the bull was ready prepared for that purpose. Among other extreme measures to avert this sentence, Philip sent into Italy two determined agents, who, having levied a strong body of partisans, seized upon the person of the Pope, then residing at Anagni, his native town in Tuscany, insulted, even

buffeted him, and had very nearly slain him, had not his Holiness, after two or three days' confinement, been rescued by a party of the people, and conveyed in safety to Rome. Here the disgrace which he had undergone had such an effect upon his spirits, that he died furiously mad, after having failed in extending the authority of the Church, in the way he meditated, and after having been obliged to submit to the encroachments, as he termed them, of the secular power. Thus died a Pontiff, of whom it is said, that he entered the church like a fox, ruled it like a lion, and died like a dog.

A.D. 1303.

King Philip the Fair, after having been thus freed of his bitter opponent, Pope Boniface, took especial care to establish a close and powerful interest with the two succeeding Pontiffs, Benedict XI., and Clement V., endeavouring by every means in his power to cultivate their favour, and even to prevail on them to shift their residence from Italy to France, in which he so far succeeded, as to induce them to reside at Avignon. In this manner did Philip obtain absolution from the sentence of excommunication pronounced by Boniface, and re-establish a friendly intercourse with the head of the church.

This King was also engaged in a violent contest with the people of Flanders, which fief he was bent upon uniting to the French kingdom. This was partly owing to his unabated hatred to his old vassal in that fief, Pierre de Dampierre, whom he

pressed so hard, that the Earl was under the necessity of submitting to his mercy.

But although the French gained great successes, and obtained possession of many towns in Flanders, they did not fail to drive the Flemings, as they had done the Sicilians, into rebellion against their new rulers, and great part of that populous nation, although at first favourable to the invaders, was soon in insurrection against them. Three sons of Count Pierre de Dampierre put themselves at the head of the insurgents. They fought a great battle with the French, in which the Flemings were in the beginning successful. King Philip escaped with difficulty from the fury of the first attack, in which the enemy penetrated to his tent; but the fidelity of the French chivalry, who rallied at the cry of the King being in danger, restored the battle, and the Flemings were finally defeated with prodigious slaughter. Notwithstanding the brilliancy of this victory, Philip was only disposed to regard it as a foundation for peace. The young princes of Flanders were still at the head of a numerous, though undisciplined army, and it might have been hazardous to drive to desperation so formidable an enemy. The eldest of the sons of Count Pierre was then admitted to do homage for the earldom of Flanders, and, on condition of paying a considerable sum, established his peace with the King.

In 1310, there occurred an important historical transaction, respecting which it is difficult to form a candid judgment. I have told you that there existed two great fraternities of military monks,

both of which were formed in the Holy Land. The one had for its object the defence of the Temple; the other was associated as Knights Hospitallers, or Knights of St John; and both held out as their principal object the defence of Palestine against the infidels. Both these communities, but in a particular degree the Templars, fell under public obloquy, on account of the immense wealth which was acquired by the order, and the lax morals of individual members. To drink like a Templar, became a common phrase; and their open licentiousness, as well as the charges imputed to them of considering less the benefit of Christians in general, and the defence of Palestine and of Jerusalem, than the aggrandizement of their own institution, were the general subjects of clamour against them. The association of the Templars, however, was destined to fall under darker and blacker accusations than affected the morals of individual knights, or the ambition of the order in general.

While these knights were the universal object of envy to the nobles, on account of their wealth, and odium to the poor, on account of their license, a singular incident brought their fate to a crisis. Two brethren of the order of the Temple had been condemned for some offence, by their Grand Master, to perpetual imprisonment. These criminals, desperate at this rigorous sentence, intimated, that, if released from imprisonment, they would disclose to the French Government circumstances concerning their order of a mysterious and highly criminal

nature. Being liberated accordingly, they declared, before persons authorized to take their evidence, that the secret rules of the order of the Temple were entirely contrary to the Christian religion, as well as to decency and morality. They stated in their examination that the Templars commenced their initiation by the most blasphemous and disgusting professions, and by ceremonies so infamous in character, that human nature cannot readily allow the possibility of their being adopted by an association consisting of men of rank, engaged ostensibly in a religious fraternity. One hundred and forty knights were in consequence arrested within the kingdom of France, and not a few of them seem to have confessed the truth of charges similar to those preferred by the knights who were the original accusers. To these confessions, considering when and how they were obtained, we can attach little credit, as we know that solitude and torture have made accused individuals confess (as in charges of witchcraft) things not only improbable, but altogether impossible.

But besides the above consideration, a very considerable number of those imprisoned Templars averred their innocence firmly. They said, that their confessing brethren had been seduced to their admissions by the promise of life and liberty; and they themselves denied strongly whatever charges were brought against them of an atrocious character. "We are but men," they said, "and have our failings as such; but, to be guilty of the wickedness imputed to us, we must be incarnate fiends."

The Pope himself held a council on this very dubious affair, in which the dissolution of the order was finally resolved upon all over Europe, although it was only in France that the Templars suffered condemnation and punishment. Fifty or sixty of them were put to death, maintaining their innocence with their last breath, and citing their persecutors to answer before God for the cruelties unjustly exercised upon them. Jaques de Molay, Grand Master of the order, with two of its other principal officers, were brought before the King of France and the Pope, and examined on the several points of the charge. At first, they admitted some parts of the accusation against them, and denied others; upon which partial confession they were condemned to be burnt to death by a slow fire. When brought to execution, after retracting what they had formerly uttered, they declared, like the rest who were executed, that they had individually committed sins incident to mortals, but that their order had never been stained by any such iniquities as had been alleged against it.

Indeed, when we consider the whole of this extraordinary charge, and recollect that the Templars, as an order, were extremely rich, that they had fallen into public odium, and had shown themselves unequal to the performance of the duty for which they were originally associated, it may reasonably be suspected that these circumstances alone were the main causes of their destruction, and that the other gross accusations preferred against them, if

not entirely false, had no other foundation than the crimes of some unworthy members.

The procedure against this celebrated society added considerably to the odium with which the latter days of Philip the Fair were overclouded. His Flemish wars had exhausted his revenues, and vexed his people with extraordinary impositions. His dissensions with Pope Boniface, the violence which he authorized towards that Pope, and above all the exactions which he made upon the clergy, caused him to be held in horror by all strict Catholics. The ruin of the Templars was imputed to his avarice and injustice. While he was thus loaded with unpopularity from different causes, a domestic affront seems to have affected him deeply.

Philip's three sons were all married to princesses of suitable birth; but the morals of the whole were so doubtful, that each of the three princes accused his wife of adultery. Joan, wife of Philip, Count of Poitou, the second of the royal brethren, was the only one of the three princesses acquitted of the charge. Margaret, wife of Louis, the eldest, and Blanche, wedded to the youngest, of the sons of Philip, were found guilty, and condemned to perpetual confinement in the fortress of Chateau Gaillard. Two Norman knights, their supposed paramours, and a number of other persons, were put to death with horrible tortures.

This shameful incident, and the disgrace which attended it, sank deep into the heart of Philip the

Fair. The King, at the same time, saw that the public dissatisfaction would render it difficult, or impossible, to raise funds for renewing the war in Flanders, upon which he was determined, assigning for a reason, that he had never received the money which the young count had engaged to pay on the conclusion of the former peace. The Count, on the contrary, alleged that he had paid the sums stipulated regularly to the King's favourite minister, named Enguerrand de Marigny. The dread, therefore, of a war for which no funds could be provided, and which was particularly unpopular in France, added to the King's embarrassment. His spirit sunk beneath such a load of evils and disgrace; he took to bed without any formal complaint, and died of the cruel disease which had carried off some of his predecessors, viz. a deep melancholy. On his deathbed, the dying monarch expressed great apprehension lest the imposts which he had laid upon his people should be the cause of his suffering punishment in the next world, and conjured his children to diminish or discharge them—a late act of penitence, to which much credit is not rashly to be given.

Nov. 1314.

Philip the Fair left behind him three sons, Louis, Philip, and Charles, each of whom mounted the throne in his turn, but all died without male issue. Of two daughters of the same king, one died unmarried, the other, Isabella, was wedded to Edward, Prince of Wales, son to Edward I., who afterwards reigned as Edward II. It was upon the extinction of the male heirs of Philip the Fair,

that the Kings of England laid claim to the inheritance of France, in contradiction to the Salic law, and in right of this same Isabel's succession to her father.

Louis X., whom, for some uncertain reason, the French called Hutin (or the Turbulent), next ascended the throne. The first point he had to consider was the bringing to account the favourite of the deceased monarch, Enguerrand de Marigny, who had been the agent of Philip's exactions, and was supposed to have peculated enormously, as the money passed through his hands. Called before the princes of the blood, and closely interrogated by the brother of the late king, Charles, Count of Valois, in particular, who, in fact, governed in the name of his nephew, the accused party answered with great insolence.

"Where," said the Count de Valois, "are the treasures of the late king?"

"You shall have a good account of them," answered the prisoner, haughtily.

"Give it me, then, instantly," answered the Prince.

"Since you press me to speak," replied Marigny, "I have given you one half of the treasure of the late king, your brother, and, with the other half, I have paid his majesty's debts."

"You lie," replied the Prince, in a rage.

"You lie yourself," replied Marigny.

In consequence of this intemperate and insulting conduct, the fallen favourite was arrested, thrown into prison, and brought to trial, when he

was charged with embezzlement of the royal revenue, and with the abuse of his late master's favour. The new king was present at this trial, and looked on the accused with more compassion than his uncle and brothers showed towards him. As the princes of the blood perceived the King's intention to screen Marigny, at least from a capital sentence, they mixed up with the other crimes of which he was accused, a charge that his wife had trafficked with a sorcerer, and an old woman, deemed a witch, for the purpose of making waxen images resembling the king and princes, which, being dissolved at a slow fire, the strength and substance of those they represented were expected to decay in proportion. The King, believing in a practice which was at that time an object of general credulity, was startled at the accusation, gave up Marigny to the vengeance of his uncle the Count de Valois, and the unfortunate favourite was hanged accordingly. The sorcerer and the witch were also put to death, and the wife of Marigny was condemned to perpetual imprisonment. It was much doubted whether the crimes of Marigny deserved quite so severe a fate; and it is certain that the aggravation which induced the King to consent to his death was entirely visionary. Charles, Count of Valois, himself repented of the persevering cruelty with which he had pressed the conviction of this person; and when he was struck with a fit of the palsy, imputed the infliction to the vengeance of Heaven for Marigny's death. On his deathbed, he bequeathed considerable sums to purchase the prayers of the

church for the pardon of Marigny's sins, as well as his own.

In the mean time, Louis Hutin arranged a marriage for himself with Clementia, or Clemence of Naples, daughter of Charles Martel, nominal King of Hungary, whom he selected to replace the criminal and unfortunate Margaret, imprisoned in Chateau Gaillard, as we have already seen. The existence of this lady was, however, still an obstacle to her husband's contracting a second union, and Louis Hutin determined to remove it by an act of violence. The unhappy Margaret was strangled with the sheets of her bed, that her husband might be at liberty to wed Clemence of Hungary, a match which took place immediately on Margaret's execution, or murder —for so a vengeance so long deferred might be most justly termed. The King and Queen were crowned at Rheims, when it was with difficulty that, by the assistance of the wealth found in the coffers of Marigny, and confiscated to the state, the necessary expenses of the coronation were defrayed. A.D. 1315.

The new-married couple had not passed many months together, when they were disturbed by the voice of war. The same Count Robert of Flanders, who had been so troublesome to Philip the Fair, was still in insurrection, and it was necessary to go to war with him, although the public finances were in bad order, and totally inadequate to meet the exigency. The King also felt all those inconveniencies which crowd upon a sovereign when his

exchequer is exhausted. When he demanded supplies, his subjects took the opportunity of insisting upon their privileges, real or pretended. The young King was much embarrassed, but he was not destined long to remain so. He died in June 1316, the year after his marriage, and the second of his reign, leaving one daughter, Joanna, a child of four or five years old, by his first wife, and his second wife far advanced in her pregnancy. The fate of the kingdom remained suspended, waiting the issue of the Queen's confinement.

A.D. 1316.

Philip of Poitou, the second brother of the deceased monarch, claimed to be declared regent, as being, in fact, the next heir to the throne, if the Queen should not be delivered of a surviving son. Nevertheless, Charles of Valois, brother of Philip le Bel, and uncle to Louis Hutin, made an attempt to contest the regency with his nephew, but the Parliament adjudged it to Philip, who came speedily to Paris, and assumed the reins of government. The Queen's confinement took place November 14, 1316, when she was delivered of a boy, who did not survive above five days, injured, as was thought, by the excess of his mother's sorrow for the husband of whom she had been so suddenly and prematurely deprived.

A.D. 1316.

Philip, the brother of Louis Hutin, therefore, was transformed from regent into king, and was consecrated the twelfth day after his infant nephew's death. It was not, however, without opposition, of which it is necessary to explain the

cause, as it concerns a remarkable point of French history.

You cannot have forgotten the Salic law, to which allusion was made in a preceding chapter,[1] denoting that rule of inheritance which excluded all females from landed inheritance within the Salic land. The question of the applicability of this law to the succession to the throne had, up to the period at which we are now arrived, never come into discussion; for it had happened, singularly enough, that from the accession of Hugo Capet, in 987, to the death of Louis Hutin, in 1316, the crown had regularly descended from father to son; twelve generations having successively possessed it during the space of three hundred and twenty-nine years, without a single instance of collateral succession. It seems, therefore, to have been partly forgotten, since the Duke of Burgundy, and the Count of Valois, with a considerable party, were disposed to dispute the claim which Philip V., called, from his stature, the Long, made to the crown. These princes contended, that since the late King, Louis Hutin, had left behind him a daughter, Joan, she must be considered as the heir of her short-lived posthumous brother; an axiom which, if allowed, barred the succession against Philip the Long.

This important matter was referred to the States-General, who, having fully and maturely considered the question, finally decided, that the Salic

[1] Chap. iv. p. 54.

law and custom, inviolably observed in the French nation, excluded females from the throne; and the right of Philip, as the nearest male heir, was universally acknowledged accordingly, in preference to that of the Princess Joan. The new sovereign extended his influence among the nobility, by bestowing among them, in marriage, his four daughters, to whom he gave considerable appanages, and thereby attached them to his interest. One of the persons whose friendship he acquired in this manner, was Louis of Flanders, whose family had given so much trouble to Philip the Fair, and had threatened the short reign of Louis Hutin. This might be accounted a considerable stroke of state policy, as the young Louis was next heir to the reigning count, his grandfather, who was an aged man. Philip the Long also renewed the league with Scotland, and transacted his affairs upon equal terms with Edward II. of England, who was his brother-in-law.

But, though prudent and politic upon the whole, King Philip the Long, in one particular, gave great dissatisfaction to his people, in the eagerness which he showed to amass large sums of money, and his haste to restore the obnoxious imposts which had been discontinued by his predecessor. This arose neither from a disposition to extravagance nor to avarice, but from the circumstance, that, like his great ancestor, Saint Louis, Philip the Long unhappily conceived himself bound to undertake a crusade so soon as ever opportunity should permit. It was with this view that he accumulated

a great treasure, in the hope of removing some of the obstacles which had proved so fatal to his ancestors.

A wild inclination to renew these perilous expeditions seemed at this time to be gaining ground all over Europe. The common people of France, in particular, were stirred up by ignorant friars and enthusiasts, who pretended to have discovered by inspiration that it was the divine will to rescue Palestine from the infidels, not by means of the great and powerful of the world, but by shepherds and peasants. This belief becoming general, bands of the most low and ignorant persons enrolled themselves under various leaders, and traversed the country under the name of Pastouraux. They were not long thus embodied without discovering there was business to do in behalf of Christianity, without going so far as the Holy Land.

The Jews, who had been persecuted and banished from France by Philip the Fair, and restored by his successor, as necessary to the existence of the state, once more became the objects of popular hatred, not only on account of their religion, and because their wealth rendered them the ready objects of plunder, but also from a new accusation, which so ignorant an age alone would have listened to. A pestilential or epidemic disease was at this time scourging France, where bad living and dearth of provisions rendered such infectious disorders very fatal. To account for the present pestilence, it was said that the Jews had accepted a bribe from the Mahometan princes, and had undertaken to poison all wells, fountains, and rivers. The

charge of participation in this crime was extended to a set of unfortunate wretches, who were rather the objects of disgust than of compassion. Those afflicted with the leprosy, who were obliged to live in hospitals apart from the rest of mankind, were stated to have joined with the Jews in the iniquitous project of poisoning the waters of the kingdom. It was an accusation easily understood, and greedily swallowed, by the vulgar. The populace of course, being already in arms, turned them against the Jews and the lepers, considering both as a species of wretched outcasts, whose sufferings ought to interest no healthy Christian. Without any formality, or trial, or otherwise, these ignorant fanatics seized upon great numbers both of the Jews and of the lepers, and tore them to pieces, or burnt them alive without scruple.

The Jews, though in modern times they may be considered as an unwarlike people, have always been remarkable for the obstinacy of their temper, and for their opposing to popular fury a power of endurance which has often struck even their oppressors with horror. Five hundred of these men, upon the present occasion, defended a castle into which they had thrown themselves, with stones, arrows, javelins, and other missiles, till, having no other weapons left, they launched the persons of their living children from the walls on the heads of their assailants, and finally put each other to the sword, rather than die by the hands of the multitude.

At Vitry, also, fifty Jews distinguished themselves by a similar act of horrible despair. They

chose with composure two of their number, a young woman and an old man, who received the charge to put the rest of their company to death. Those intrusted with the execution of this fearful duty executed their instructions without dispute or resistance on the part of the sufferers. When the others were all slain, the old man next received his death at the hand of the female; and to close the tragedy, this last threw herself from the walls of the place; but having only broken her thigh-bone in the fall, the besiegers threw her alive into the fire which consumed the other dead bodies.

The King himself was obliged to yield to the popular prejudice. He once more banished the Jews, and by a proclamation confined the lepers to their respective hospitals, under the penalty of being burnt alive. The royal troops were next employed with success in putting down the Pastouraux, and other tumultuous assemblies of fanatical banditti, and restoring the peace of the kingdom.

Shortly after, King Philip the Long died, after a reign of five years, in 1321. As was frequently the case on the demise of great persons in that age, his death was strongly suspected of being caused by poison. He was, upon the whole, a well-meaning King; and the love of money which he had at first testified was atoned for by an edict, near the close of his reign, dispensing with the imposts upon the people, and by a meritorious attempt to reduce the coins, and the weights and measures, throughout all France, to a uniform standard, a matter of great importance to commercial intercourse. A.D. 1321.

Philip the Long was succeeded by his brother Charles the Fair; the Salic law having its full force in his behalf as heir-male, and his right being admitted, to the exclusion of the daughters of the deceased Philip the Long, and, in particular, the Duchess of Burgundy, who was the eldest of these princesses. Charles the Fair, being thus placed on the throne, became desirous to get rid of his wife Blanche, who still remained a prisoner, on account of her infidelity.

A.D. 1321.

He did not on this occasion proceed to the extremities adopted by his eldest brother, Louis Hutin, who, in similar circumstances, had the frail and unfortunate Margaret strangled, but contented himself with obtaining a sentence of divorce from Rome, upon the old pretence that Blanche and he were related within the forbidden degrees. The supposed connexion was even more flimsy than usual, being only of a spiritual nature, the mother of Blanche, having, it seems, been godmother to the King. It was better, however, to be divorced as the daughter of her husband's godmother, than to be strangled with a pair of sheets. The discarded princess covered her disgrace by taking the veil in the Abbey of Maubuisson.

In room of this lady, Charles espoused Margaret, daughter of Henry of Luxembourg, seventh Emperor of Germany of that name. But no good fortune attended the marriages of this race; Queen Margaret was killed by the overturn of her chariot, an accident which proved fatal to her and to an unborn male infant.

As his third wife, Charles the Fair married

with dispensation, Joanna, a cousin of his own, who survived him many years, but brought him no family save daughters.

Charles the Fair began his reign by two remarkable punishments. Among the other chiefs of independent armed companies who were the pest of France, one Jourdain de Lisle was brought to his deserved sentence, and capitally executed, although a nephew of the reigning Pope. Besides having committed murder, and rapine of every description, not even sparing the churches, he had put to death a pursuivant of the King, having the royal arms about his neck, which was considered an act of high-treason. He dashed out the brains of this man with his own mace, for daring to serve a royal writ upon him. All intercession was in vain employed for so notorious a miscreant, who incurred his deserved fate upon the gibbet. The prosecution against Gerard de la Guette was of a more ordinary character. He had been a low-born officer of finance, raised to the dignity of treasurer by Philip the Long, and, as usual, stood accused of having failed to render to the new King a just account of the sums intrusted to him by the old one. He was arrested, but escaped the fate of Marigny by dying in prison.

The affairs of England, which now became rather perplexed, next attracted Charles's anxious attention. There had been for a long time a friendly understanding betwixt the courts of England and France: but in 1322, some disturbances occurred in Guienne, which made Charles A.D. 1322. the Fair in more peremptory terms than usual de-

mand that the King of England should appear and render homage for the possessions he still occupied in France.

This was an inconvenient summons to Edward II., a weak and unfortunate Prince, who, having been completely defeated by the Scots, had, moreover, been much thwarted by the English barons, who put to death Gaveston, his favourite, and had reduced the King himself to a very low ebb. Latterly, having been successful against the insurgent barons, the King had selected for his minion Hugh Spencer, an ambitious and profligate young man, who now ruled the King with absolute sway Isabella, the Queen of Edward II., was, as a French Princess, and sister of the reigning monarch of that country, judged the fittest agent to represent Edward at the court of France, since her husband himself was afraid to visit that kingdom, and his favourite Spencer was still more unwilling that his master should take such a journey. It is said, besides, that Edward, who did not love his wife, was desirous to be rid of the restraint on his pleasures imposed by her presence in England. But he and his advisers failed to observe, that Isabella, finding herself excluded from her husband's affections, had contracted an aversion to him which amounted to hatred. There is also too much reason to believe that the same exasperated Princess had already become attached criminally to Roger Mortimer, afterwards well known as her paramour. He had escaped from the Tower of London some time before; and, as he was now residing in France, it was imprudent, to say the least, to send the

Queen where their correspondence might be easily renewed or continued.

Edward, however, looking no farther than his immediate convenience, permitted, or rather enjoined, his wife to go to France, to negotiate between her brother and her husband. But the personal presence of Edward himself was still required by the King of France, as a condition of the restoration of Guienne. Again Isabella interposed her mediation, and procured the consent of the French King, that if Edward, Prince of Wales, afterwards Edward III., would perform the homage, investiture of those territories should be granted to him, without demanding his father's personal presence. This was regularly transacted in the course of a few days. But the unfortunate Edward II. was not aware that his Queen had only gone abroad with the purpose of returning at the head of an army, by which he was afterwards dethroned, imprisoned, and murdered.

Isabella had already commenced her intrigues to that effect, which did not escape the notice of the French court. It does not indeed appear that Charles the Fair connived at the conspiracy of his sister against her husband, though it is alleged that she received the advice of Robert of Artois, by which she left the Court of Paris for that of Hainault, where she arranged a marriage for her son with Philippa, the daughter of the Count, and obtained the military supplies with which she afterwards invaded England.

Charles the Fair was now beginning to feel the same infirm health which had carried of his bre-

thren. He finally died at Bois de Vincennes, and the first line of the descendants of Hugo Capet became extinct in his person as the last male heir of Philip the Fair. It was remarked, that at the death of the last-named monarch, there existed three sons at man's estate, so that, according to all human probability, the succession to the crown seemed amply provided for; yet it pleased God that in so short a space as fourteen years they should all be carried off by death, without any of them leaving male issue. The only chance of an heir-male of this branch coming into existence, was, that the Queen-dowager Joanna, third wife of Charles the Fair, might perhaps be delivered of a son. Her child, however, proved to be a daughter, which, opening the succession to Philip of Valois (son of Charles of Valois, and grandson of Philip the Hardy), the next heir-male of the House of Capet, gave rise to the conflicting claims of the Kings of England and France, and to the series of dreadful wars which ravaged the two kingdoms, but especially that of France.

A.D. 1327.

END OF VOLUME TWENTY SEVENTH.

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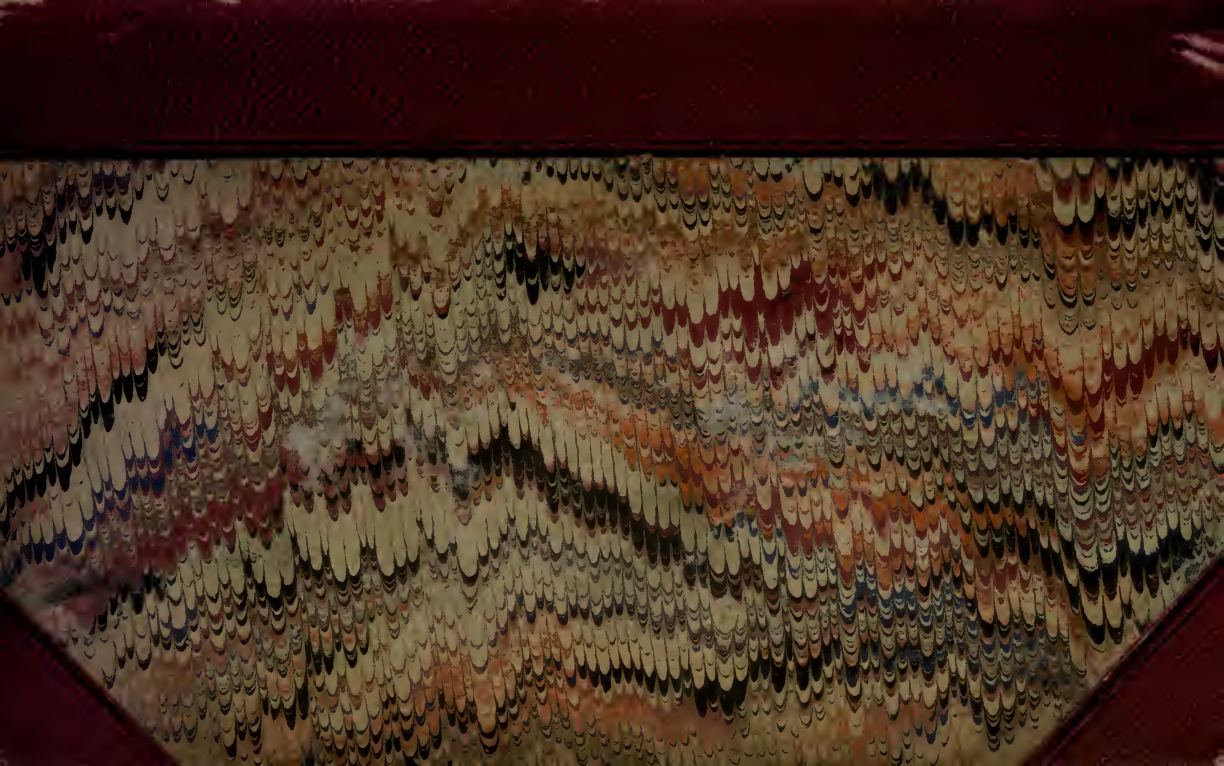
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